

A U S C H W I T Z

27 JANUARY 1945 - 27 JANUARY 2005:

SIXTY YEARS OF PROPAGANDA



Origins, development and decline of the “gas chamber” propaganda lie

[2005 text, revised, corrected and updated]

By Carlo Mattogno

Translated by C. Porter

1) Forgotten propaganda lies

On 27 January 1945, the vanguard of the Soviet 100th Infantry Division forming part of the 60th Army of the I Ukrainian Front, reached the Auschwitz- Birkenau complex, now abandoned by the SS.

The Soviet propaganda machine went to work immediately, echoing the most hare-brained stories circulating among the inmates – perhaps through excess of zeal.

On 2 February, *Pravda* published an article by its correspondent, Boris Poljevoi, entitled , “The Death Complex at Auschwitz”, in which, among other things, we may read the following:

“They [*the Germans*] levelled the mounds of so-called “old” mass graves in the Eastern area, blew up and destroyed the traces of their electrical conveyor belt (*eljektrokonyjejera*) where hundreds of inmates had been killed simultaneously by electrical current (*eljektriceskim tokom*), after which the bodies were placed on a conveyor belt moving slowly towards a pit furnace (*sciachtnuju pje*) **2**, where the bodies were burnt completely”

3.

Until this time, Soviet propaganda had never paid much attention to Auschwitz. *Pravda*, in the preceding months, had only dedicated a few lines to it, reporting, moreover, information received from London, according to which the Auschwitz “death factory” had three crematoria, “equipped with gas chambers””, with a capacity of 10,000 bodies per day! **4**

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1 The mass graves, real or imaginary, were located in the eastern area of the camp.

2 Equivalent to the German word “*Schachtofen*” [pit furnace], an enormous cylinder of refractory material employed for the production of gas from the gasification of coal. No installation of this type ever existed at Auschwitz.

3 *Kombinat smjerti v Osvjetzimje*. “*Pravda*”, 2 February 1945, p. 4.

4 *Gjermanskij “lagjer’ smjerti” v Pol’scje* (German “Death Camp” in Poland). “*Pravda*”, 24 March 1944, p. 4.

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The propaganda story recounted by Boris Poljevoi, above, was picked up by a former Auschwitz inmate, a certain Lieberman, who stated as follows on 27 September 1945 :

“As I already said, I belonged to the working party responsible for unloading the ‘stiffs’ at the station. At that time, we never had any contact with the inmates from the big camp. We were put into quarantine separately, but we were housed together with another working party doing service in the crematorium and gas chamber. That’s why I know what happened [*there*]. The men and women went into the so-called shower area and got undressed separately, to avoid panic.

“Once they were undressed, they entered the central gas chamber through separate doors.

The central gas chamber could hold 3,000 people. The gas was released from the shower heads and from gas bombs thrown through apertures pierced for the purpose. Death occurred in five minutes. On some days, when enormous transports arrived at Birkenau station, 42,000 people were gassed.

“Upon completion of the gassing procedure, the floor of the gas chamber opened automatically and the bodies fell into a subterranean chamber, were inmates extracted their gold teeth and cut off their hair to a certain length. [...].

“After the gold teeth had been extracted, the bodies were loaded onto a moving conveyor belt and carried to the crematory ovens through underground passageways. There were four ovens, one big and three small, which had a capacity of 400 bodies in five minutes **5**. Later, when the number of bodies exceeded the capacity of the ovens, ditches were dug and the bodies were drenched in oil and thrown in. I personally saw these trenches and smelt the stench of the combustion. I was also able to visit the gas chambers and crematoria, when I was ordered to clean them one day when they were out of use.

“I never personally saw the trollies for transporting the bodies, nor did I see the ovens in action, but, as I have said, some of the working parties working in the gas chambers and ovens lived with us and they told me these details. This special group was called the *Sonderkommando* (special commando). I personally know a certain Jacob Weinschein from Paris, who is a survivor of this commando” **7**.

In 1946, a French governmental publication, with reference to a “Report from the Russian services”, reported another version of the story:

“800-900 metres from the location of the furnaces, the inmates departed on trollies travelling on rails. These

rails, at Auschwitz, were of varying dimensions and contained from 10 to 15 persons. When it was loaded, the trolley was placed in movement along an inclined plane, where it then entered a gallery at high speed. At the end of the gallery, the trolley smashed into a wall. This opened the wall automatically, and the trolley tipped, dumping its human cargo of living beings into the furnace. The trolley was then followed by another, full of another group of inmates, and so on.” **8**.

According to another, hybrid variant of the story, recounted by the former inmate Leo Laptos, the “gas chambers” were rigged out like shower baths, with shower heads squirting “gas, not water”, after which

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5 This corresponds to a cremation capacity of 115,200 bodies in 24 hours!

6 A person unknown to Holocaust historiography.

7 *From a Memorandum by Mr. Lieberman, September 27, 1945*, in: Azriel Eisenberg, *The Lost Generation: Children in the Holocaust*. Pilgrim Press, New York, 1982, pp. 139-141. As a source, the author mentions: “*Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression*, Vol. VI, Office of United States Chief Counsel for Prosecution of Axis Criminality, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946; Vol. XI, pp. 1100-1103 (Document D 251)”.

8 *Camps de concentrations*. Service d'Information des Crimes de Guerre. Office Français d'Édition, Paris, 1946, p. 182.
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the floor tipped upwards, causing the bodies to fall onto a conveyor belt which carried then to the crematorium” **9**.

Even during the war, the propaganda branch of the Resistance movement at Auschwitz was busy inventing other, no less fantastic, methods of extermination, such as the story of the “pneumatic hammer” **10**, the “electrical chambers” and the “electrical bath”. On 23 October 1942, the underground newspaper *Informacja bieca* (Current Information), no. 39 (64), published the following news item:

“According to the report of an SS employee at the electrical chambers (*przy komorach elektr.*), the number of victims killed daily officially amounted to 2,500 per night. They were killed in the electrical bath (*w a ni elektrycznej*) and in gas chambers” **11**.

And a report dated 18 April 1943 attributed these methods of extermination to Auschwitz:

- “b. Electrical chambers. These chambers had metallic walls; the victims were pushed inside and the high-voltage current was turned on.
- c. The so-called *Hammerluft* system. This was a pneumatic hammer. There were special chambers in which a hammer fell from the ceiling and the victims died under high air-pressure.” **12**.

Still in May 1945, Mordechai Lichtenstein declared:

“The bodies were brought to the crematoria on little trolleys, where they were burned by 6,000 volt electrical current.” **13**.

In June 1944, at Stockholm, an official of the Polish government in exile, a certain Waskiewicz, interrogated a Pole who had fled Poland after spending 7 weeks in Auschwitz. On 18 June, Waskiewicz drew up a report in French on the interrogation of the witnesss **14**, whom he indicated by initials only: K.J. The latter was a conscript worker who had been arrested by the Gestapo upon his return from a few days furlough, and sentenced to 10 weeks in a concentration camp. He was then interned in Rattwitz camp, in Silesia, for three weeks, after which he was transferred to Auschwitz, where he spent the remaining 7 weeks.

In his report on this camp, the witness repeated the fairy tale of the conveyor belt, but in a different context:

“At every roll call, a special service carried away all those who had fallen where they fell and no longer responded to blows and kicks. Without making sure whether they were even really dead, they were transported directly to the crematory oven on a mechanical transporter, the capacity of which, in 1943, was designed to handle 1,000 persons [at a time].” 15.

But the most fantastic part of the testimony is this:

“Section XVIII (Jewish) was equipped with a gas chamber and a factory manufacturing grease for machinery. K.J. declares that he had seen how the Germans there

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9 L. de Jong, *Die Niederlande und Auschwitz*, in: “Vierteljahrsshefte für Zeitgeschichte”, year 17, no. 1, January 1969, p. 9.

10 *Obóz koncentracyjny Oswiecim w swietle akt Delegatury Rzadu R.P. na Kraj* (Auschwitz concentration camp in the light of the Polish Governmental Delegation in the country). “*Zeszyty Oswiecimskie*” (Auschwitz Notebooks), special edition I, Oswiecim 1968, p. 32, 43, 54. The Delegation was the representation in Poland of the Polish government in exile at London.

11 Idem, p. 52.

12 Martin Gilbert, *Auschwitz & the Allies. The politics of rescue*. Arrow Books Limited, London, 1984, p. 130.

13 Testimony of Mordechai Lichtenstein in: *Jewish Survivors Report Documents on Nazi Guilt. No 1. Eighteen Months in the Oswiecim Extermination Camp*. May 1945, p. 12. ROD, c[21]jog.

14 Central Dept. Poland No. 26. 18 June 1944. Political Memorandum. From: Press Reading Bureau, Stockholm. To: Political Intelligence Departement, London. *Rapport de M. Waskiewicz sur l'interrogation de K.J.* PRO, FO371/39451, pp. 137-140.

15 Idem, p. 138.

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transformed the bodies of the gassed Jews into grease, which was then shipped off in packages labelled “Schmierstoff-Fabrik Auschwitz” [Auschwitz Lubricant Factory].

As he was responsible for carrying away the bodies of gassed persons, he had been able to observe the process on a group of 1,500 Polish Jews, “shipped” in May 1943. Upon their arrival, these Jews were not mistreated. Nor did they appear to be particularly ill-nourished. As soon as they arrived, they were made to take a real bath, and were even given soap for the purpose. Then, afterwards, their clothing was taken away, they were selected, grouped separately into fat ones and thin ones, women and men. Every group was then sent to the gas chambers separately, a vast concrete room which was accessed via a triple door. The victims generally died after the doors were closed. The room was then rapidly ventilated, and the inmates responsible for carrying away the bodies were supposed to finish their job as soon as possible, before rigor mortis set in. They were carried away on special trollies which were carried to the grease factory by means of a special mechanical transporter. There, by means of chemical processes the nature of were unknown to K.J., the bodies were transformed into pulp and the grease was extracted. The remains, in the form of a few bones and a shapless mass, was carefully burned in the crematory oven” 16.

In view of the above, Waskiewicz’s introductory description of the witness, K.J. – a genuine forerunner of the present-day historians, who are always prepared to regurgitate the most hare-brained “eyewitness testimonies” without batting an eyelid – sounds almost comical:

“Of peasant origins, simple and sometimes primitive, [he was] without imagination, but an excellent and conscientious observer. His truthfulness appears indisputable” 17.

The fairy tale of the shower heads squirting poison gas instead of water was invented fairly early on. It appears in a “Letter Written in Auschwitz Camp”, dated as early as 29 August 1942, in which we read:

“The most terrifying thing is the mass executions in gas chambers constructed especially for the purpose. There are two of these, and they can contain 1,200 people. They are equipped with shower baths, unfortunately delivering poison gas instead of water. (*Urz dzone s a nie z prysznicami, z których niestety zamiast wody wydobywa si gaz*)” 18.

In an underground report on living conditions in the camp dating back to December 1942 or January 1943, the gassing procedure is described as follows:

“On the inside, the chambers are equipped so as to resemble a shower bath, which only differ from real shower baths in the fact that the showers distribute poison gas instead of water (*miast wody, z pryszniców wydobywa sitrujcy gaz*). [...].

“Inside the barracks, they must undress immediately, [on the pretext that they are are going to take a bath. They are even given towels and soap. After their shower, they are supposed to receive underwear and clothing. When the chamber is full, the doors are closed and the gas is emitted through openings designed to look like shower heads (*i przez otwory w formie pryszniców wydobywa sigaz*)” 19.

The imaginary story of the “poison gas shower baths” immediately received widespread publicity, to such an extent that Dr. Gilbert, the psychologist at the [First] Nuremberg Trial, even inserted them into the mouth of Rudolf Höss, the commandant of Auschwitz:

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16 Idem, p. 139.

17 Idem, p. 137.

18 Obóz koncentracyjny Oświecim w Swietle akt Delegatury Rzadu R.P. na Kraj, op. cit., p. 43.

19 AGK, NTN, 155, pp. 299-300.

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“The killing [procedure] was easy, there wasn’t even any need for guards to make them enter the chambers; they went in expecting to take a shower, and instead of water, we opened [the] poison gas”.

The French underground newspaper *Fraternité*, in its issue for May 1944, published the following “eyewitness testimony” on Auschwitz:

“Upon arrival, all the men who were still able to work were sent to the work sites immediately. The others, women, children, old people, were sent to the showers. They were taken into a splendid, modern building...

“But, instead of showers of warm water, which would have refreshed their tired limbs, they received a spray of toxic gas: and in a few instants, there was nothing left but bodies, piled up against the doors through which they had attempted to flee – the bodies of mothers with their children in their arms, or old people clutching their spouses in a supreme gesture of protection” 21.

Naturally, the story of the shower baths was spread far and wide by former camp inmates. Here is an example of Sofia Schafranov’s version:

“They faked a shower bath for the victims: although they knew now just what kind of ‘shower bath’ it was, they were even given towels and a piece of soap; after which, they were made to undress and enter hermetically sealed concrete chambers. The ceiling was decked out with shower heads, which emitted poison gas instead of water.” 22.

The most fantastic version of the “shower bath” fairy tale was invented by Ada Bimko, a Polish Jew deported to Auschwitz on 4 August 1943, and who testified as follows, under oath [!], at the Belsen trial: In August 1944, she had been compelled to enter a “gas chamber” at Birkenau to remove blankets [sic] which had allegedly been left there by the gassing victims. She had hardly entered when she had the immense good

luck to meet an inmate member of the so-called *Sonderkommando* from the same city, after which a very agreeable SS non-commissioned officer hurriedly showed her the top-secret extermination gassing installations. This is her description:

“In the first room, I saw a man who came from the same city as I did. There was also an SS man with the rank of *Unterscharführer* who belonged to the Red Cross. I was told that the people left their clothes in this first big room, and that they were taken from this room into another, and I had the impression that hundreds and hundreds of people [of persons] could fit into this room, it was so big. It looked like a shower bath or the bathing rooms we had at the camp. There were large numbers of shower heads on the ceiling, in parallel rows. Everybody who entered this room was given a towel and a bar of soap, so as to give them the impression that they were about to take a shower, but anybody who looked at the floor could see that it wasn’t true, because there were no exit drains for the water. This room also had a little door which led to a very dark room, which looked like a corridor.

I saw lines of rails with a little trolley, which they called a truck, and I was told that the prisoners who had already been gassed were placed on these trollies, and sent straight to the crematoria. I believe that the crematorium was located in the same building, but I didn’t see the ovens. There was also a room higher than the other by a few steps, with a very low ceiling, and I saw two pipes which, as I was told, contained the gas. There were also two enormous metallic containers that contained the gas.” 23.

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20 *Nuremberg Diary*. By G.M. Gilbert, Ph.D.. Formerly Prison Psychologist at the Nuremberg Trial of the Nazi War Criminals. Farrar, Straus and Company. New York, 1947, p. 250.

21 Stéphane Courtois, Adam Rayski, *Qui savait quoi? L’extermination des Juifs 1941-1945*. La Découverte, Paris, 1987, p. 220.

22 Alberto Cavaliere, *I campi della morte in Germania nel racconto di una sopravvissuta*. Milan, 1945, p. 40.

23 *Trial of Josef Kramer and Forty-Four Others (The Belsen Trial)*. William Hodge and Company. London, Edinborough, Glasgow, 1949, pp. 67-68.

In a deposition annexed to the trial records, Ada Bimko stated:

“The SS told me that the cylinders contained the gas, which went through the pipes into the gas chamber” 24, therefore, the gas travelled from the containers into the pipes and through the shower heads into the “gas chamber”!

But even this story had its variants. One particularly extravagant variant was recounted by Bruno Piazza, who had been sentenced to death in the “gas chamber”, from which he miraculously managed to save himself:

“I heard one of them say, ‘Crematorium’. We continued marching through the camp, between two rows of barracks of a type quite similar to those of the last camp. When we got to the end, they made us turn left and then made us enter a barracks in semi-darkness, all eight hundred of us. Night had already fallen. In the middle there was a stove that had gone out and three ship’s buckets of zinc. Suddenly, they turned on the lights and we saw that we were in a sort of shower room. There were twenty shower heads on the ceiling. [...]. This room, the antechamber of the crematorium, was the gas chamber [...]. No doubt of it now. I had heard talk of the system: they put a white layer of potassium cyanide powder underneath the shower and then suddenly turned on the water. This caused the release of deadly poisonous cyanide gas. Then the clerk [sic] entered with a mask on his face, sprinkled the powder, turned on the shower, left, closed the door, and after ten minutes they were all dead, asphyxiated. At the other end of the room was a high door which was said to lead to the crematorium by means of an inclined plane. [...].

“In the past, asphyxia had been achieved using a different method from the current one, with the showers. A hole was pierced in the ceiling. The hole was opened by an automatic valve, ejecting three or four pre-prepared cyanide gas cylinders into the interior of the chamber. But the system was not very safe, because sometimes the cover of the cylinder wasn’t broken in the fall, and it was then necessary to repeat the procedure four or five

times, to be sure that the gas had actually been emitted into the chamber” 25.

At the Degesch trial in 1949, a witness mentioned the rumour that “at Birkenau, the gas was introduced into the chamber through fake shower heads”, but both Dr. Heli, the inventor of Zyklon B, and Dr. Ra., physicist, declared that this gassing technique was impossible, so that the High Court of Frankfurt am Main, in its judgement of 28 March 1949, acknowledged that it was incorrect:

“The Tribunal does not doubt the fact that the hypothesis that the gas was emitted from a tin can of Zyklon B by means of a tap and introduced into the gas chamber, is erroneous, so that it is no longer necessary to perform the experiment requested by one of the defendants” 26.

The story of the “cylinders of hydrocyanic acid” was an adaptation of the more commonly-heard version of the “bombs” containing hydrocyanic acid, which was invented towards the end of 1943 and the beginning of 1944 by Jerzy Tabeau, who was interned at Auschwitz under the name of Jerzy Wesoowski on 23 March 1942 and escaped on the night of 19-20 November 1943. In his report, which began circulating in the summer of 1944, he wrote:

“After reaching the area with the gas chamber in it, which was surrounded by barbed wire, the condemned men had to undress completely, men, women and children together. Each person received a towel and some soap. They were then all crammed into the chamber, with plenty of blows and mistreatment. This is how the chamber was filled with as many people as it could hold,

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24 Idem, p. 742.

25 Bruno Piazza, *Perché gli altri dimenticano*. Feltrinelli, Milano, 1956, pp. 127-131.

26 C.F. Rüter, *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen. Sammlung deutscher Strafurteile wegen nationalsozialistischer Tötungsverbrechen 1945-1966*. Amsterdam, 1968-1981, vol. XIII, p. 134.

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after which the door was closed tight and SS men assigned for the purpose poured the bombs, which were filled with Prussic acid, through the valves located in the walls. After ten minutes, the doors were opened and a special commando (always made up of Jews) carried away the bodies and made room for the next convoy” 27.

A report dated 23 August 1944, by contrast, mentioned “vials”:

“Under the pretext of visiting a shower bath, they make the people undress, give them soap and send them to the ‘shower area’, where they close the doors air-tight, after which they throw vials inside, full of an unknown liquid. The vials break and release the gas, which causes their death [...] within five or ten minutes.” 28.

This fantastic story was also echoed by Kurt Gerstein, who wrote that the Degesch director had told him “that for the killing of men, he had supplied hydrocyanic acid in vials (*in Ampullen*)” 29.

However, according to him, at Auschwitz, these “vials” were used in a different manner:

“Only at Auschwitz were millions of children killed by holding a wad [soaked with] hydrocyanic acid underneath their noses” 30.

In addition to “bombs” or “cylinders” or “vials” of hydrocyanic acid, other substances were indicated as methods of extermination: “sternutatory gases” (*gaz sternutatoires*) 31 and a “certain substance which put the victims to sleep (*einschläfern*) in one minute” 32.

Ex-inmate Otto Wolken, by contrast, spoke of gassing ditches:

“Ditches were dug and covered with canvas, serving as provisional gas chambers” 33.

At the Nuremberg Trial, on 21 June 1946, the American prosecutor, Jackson, mentioned another method of alleged extermination “in the vicinity of Auschwitz”: the atomic bomb!

“A village, a small village was provisionally erected, with temporary structures, and in it approximately 20,000 Jews were put. By means of this newly invented weapon of destruction, these 20,000 people were eradicated almost instantaneously, and in such a way that there was no trace left of them; that it developed, the explosive developed, temperatures of from 400° to 500° centigrade and destroyed them without leaving any trace at all.” 34.

As we may see, the Americans, to put it in a nutshell, already possessed the bad habit of imputing their own crimes to their enemies of the moment.

These fairy tales quickly fell into oblivion, being replaced by other, better organised, fairy tales, which shall be examine under Heading 3, which nonetheless also causing a certain disconcertment among Holocaust historians.

The latter, after all, were then compelled to proclaim that it was not the case that these propaganda

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27 *Das Lager Oswiecim (Auschwitz)*, in: A. Silberschein, *Die Judenausrottung in Polen*. Series Three, Section II.: *Die Lagergruppe Oswiecim (Auschwitz)*. Geneva, 1944, pp. 67-68.

28 Report published at:

<http://forum.axishistory.com/viewtopic.php?t=96187&start=0&postdays=0&postorder=asc&highlight=pressac>

29 German report by K. Gerstein dated 6 May 1945. PS-2170, p. 9.

30 Idem.

31 *La politique pratiquée par la Suisse à l'égard des réfugiés au cours des années 1933 à 1945*. Report intended for the Conseil fédéral à l'intention des conseils législatifs by Professor Carl Ludwig, Basel. Berne, 1957, p. 220.

32 Alleged report of SS-Sturmbannführer Franke-Gricksch of May 1943. Text in: J.-C. Pressac, *Auschwitz: Technique and operation of the gas chambers*. The Beate Klarsfeld Foundation, New York, 1989, p. 238. The report consists solely of an alleged “transcription” by a certain Erich M. Lippmann, an officer in the US Army, responsible for collecting documents for purposes of evidence at the American trials at Nuremberg. The original document does not exist.

33 AGK, NTN, 88 (Höss trial), p. 45.

34 *Der Prozess gegen die Hauptkriegsverbrecher vor dem internationalen Militärgerichtshof*. Nuremberg 14. November 1945-1. October 1946. Nuremberg, 1948, vol. XVI, p. 580 [pp. 529-30 in English]

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same fairy tales later developed, through a variety of literary elaborations, into the Holocaust “revealed truth” which reigns supreme for the moment; on the contrary it was claimed that such tales were a mere “reflection” of a “truth” which was only discovered later, but which was not yet known when these fairy tales were invented.

The value of such conjectures will be examined under Heading 7.

2) The lie of the industrial exploitation of human corpses

In the paragraph above, I reported the manner in which the “eyewitness” K.J. described the “Auschwitz Lubricant Factory”.

Studying the origins of this lie is important because it shows clearly the manner in which the Auschwitz propagandists elaborated upon their own fairy tales, starting with a particle of truth, but distorting it so as to invest it with a terrible criminal significance. This was the procedure utilised in creating the fairy tale of the gas chambers.

The lie of the manufacture of human soap was too juicy to avoid propagandistic exploitation, but since the propagandists lacked any sense of proportion, the successive developments of the tale degenerated into the

grotesque and ridiculous.

For example, the following tale was told by ex-Auschwitz inmate Olga Lengyel:

“The ‘Nordic supermen’ knew how to profit from everything: enormous barrels were used to gather the human fat which melted at high temperatures and it was not to be wondered at that the camp soap had a rather disgusting odour and the inmates looked upon certain pieces of fatty sausage with suspicion!” 35.

This tale, too, has now fallen into oblivion, although attempts are made to resurrect it from time to time.

In 1994, a researcher from the Auschwitz Museum, Andrzej Strzelecki, declared:

“There is no truth that human fat was used to make soap at Auschwitz, or that human skin was tanned to make lampshades, book covers, wallets or other objects” 36.

But another fairy tale, no less grim, is, incredibly, still around: that of the exploitation of human bones. This accusation had already been made at the First Nuremberg Trial by the Soviet prosecutor, Smirnov:

“From 1943 the Germans, in order to utilize the bones which were not burned, started to grind them and sell them to the firm Strem for the manufacture of superphosphates. In the camp there were found bills of lading, addressed to the firm Strem, of 112 tons and 600 kilograms of bone meal from human corpses. The Germans also used for industrial purposes hair shorn from women who were doomed for extermination.” 37.

And in the Auschwitz Museum’s most important work, published at the end of the 1900s, Andrzej Strzelecki himself adds:

“According to the investigations of the Soviet War Crimes Commission Investigating Crimes Committed in Auschwitz concentration camp, the bones of the cadavers cremated were ground and then sold as “bone fertilizer” to the chemical industry Strem di Strzemieszyce, at Dbrowa Górnica, in the region of Dbrowa; the bones were to be transformed into fertilizer. At least 100 tons of ground human bones were shipped to this industry from Auschwitz concentration camp between 1943 and 1944” 39.

The fairy tale was based on a list drawn up by a Polish inmate, dated 27 February 1945, and delivered by him to the Soviet Commission. This bears the heading “Wykaz nadanych

35 O. Lengyel, *I forni di Hitler*. Carroccio, Bologna, 1966, p. 130.

36 A. Strzelecki, *The Plunder of Victims and their Corpses*, in: Yisrael Gutman and Michael Berenbaum Editors, *Anatomy of the Auschwitz Death Camp*. Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1994, p. 262.

37 *Der Prozess gegen die Hauptkriegsverbrecher vor dem internationalen Militärgerichtshof*, op. cit., Nuremberg, 1947, vol. VII, pp. 644-645.

38 But the cremation produced only ash, not bones!

39 A. Strzelecki, *Die Verwertung der Leichen der Opfer*, in: *Studien zur Geschichte des Konzentrations- und Vernichtungslagers Auschwitz*. By W. Dlugoborski and F. Piper. Verlag des Staatlichen Museums Auschwitz-Birkenau. Oswiecim, 1999, vol. II, pp. 501-502.

Pursuing the investigation in greater depth, we can see the origins of the lie of the use of human fat for industrial purposes.

The slaughter house at Auschwitz camp, as shown on an installation inventory dated 27 September 1944⁴², contained an installation for the extraction of grease from animal bones (*Knochenentfettungs[anlage]*), which was installed as early as September 1942 ⁴³. The related device (*Knochenentfettungsapparat*) had been supplied by the M. Trüsted company of Berlin-Hannover, as shown in a letter from the company management to the management of Auschwitz concentration camp dated 25 June 1942 ⁴⁴. The installation was used to extract grease from animal bones to enrich the diet of the inmates, but, for camp propaganda, it was transformed into an installation for the industrial exploitation of human fat!

It is worth noting that the British propaganda story of the “corpse factory” during the First World War, correctly termed by Arthur Ponsonby “one of the most revolting lies invented during the war” ⁴⁵ had a similar origin.

The Times, for example, on 16 April 1917, wrote that the German army had a “corpse recycling plant” (*Kadaververwertungsanstalt*) in which the fat obtained from the bodies of fallen soldiers was transformed into lubricant oils, while the other remains were ground up into osseous flour, which was then mixed with food for swine ⁴⁶.

As Walter Laquer wrote, “there were, in fact, similar installations in Germany (*Kadaververwertungsanstalten*)⁴⁷, but they processed animal corpses [“*Kadaver*” in German] and not the bodies of human beings [“*Leichen*” in German]” ⁴⁸.

He adds:

“In the mid-1920s, Austen Chamberlain, the [British] Minister of Foreign Affairs, admitted in Parliament that the story of the corpse factory was without foundation” ⁴⁹.

But this sort of propaganda blooms afresh even today. One recent news item described the discovery in Israel of a box of soap supposed produced out of Jewish fat, arousing the

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40. The text says “apfälle”, that is, “Abfälle”, “wastes” – the equivalent term in Polish (mentioned in the document) “odpadki”, wastes.

41 GASF, 7021-108-17, p. 130 (original document) and 131 (Russian translation).

42 *Bestandplan des provisorischen Schlachthauses BW 33B*. GASF, 7021-108-48, p. 14.

43 *Baubericht für Monat September 1942*. RGVA, 502-1-24, p. 14: “...Knochenentfettungsanlage eingebaut...”.

44 GASF, 7021-108-44, p. 1. Pages 2-11 contain other documents on this device, including a service manual and a technical drawing of the same.

45 A. Ponsonby, *Falsehood in Wartime*. Institute for Historical Review, Torrance, California, 1980, p. 102. See Chapter XVII, “The Corpse Factory”, pp. 102-113.

46 Idem, p. 102.

47 The classic work of the engineer Wilhelm Heepke *Die Kadaver-Vernichtungsanlagen* (Verlag von Carl Marhold. Halle an der Saale, 1905) dedicated a suitable section to the “Kadaver-Vernichtungs- und Verwertungsanstalten als Gross-Anlagen” („Establishments for the destruction and recycling of carrion as large-scale installations“) (p. 129 et seq.).

48 W. Laqueur, *Il terribile segreto*. Giuntina, Florence, 1983, p. 18.

49 Idem, p. 19.

annoyance of the Yad Vashem Institute. One of their spokespersons has in fact declared that “there is no proof that the Nazis made soap out of human fat during the Holocaust” ⁵⁰.

Other, no less revolting lies also circulated during the Great War. Laquer notes:

“In March 1916, the *Daily Telegraph* reported that the Austrians and Bulgarians had killed 700,000 Serbs [in gas chambers], using poison gas . A few readers probably remembered this story when, in June 1942, the *Daily Telegraph* was the first to report that 700,000 Jews had been gassed” 51.

But a few Resistance members at Auschwitz “remembered” this “report” even earlier than the *Daily Telegraph*, towards the end of 1941.

3) Birth of the propaganda lie of the gas chambers

The story of the gas chambers was born rather early on, but with a highly specific connotation: experimentation with toxic gases for military purposes, with precise reference to the use of asphyxiating gases during the First World War, and the alleged gassing of 700,000 Serbs. This version of the story appeared in a report from the underground resistance movement at Auschwitz camp on 24 October 1941:

“At Oświecim [Auschwitz], at the beginning of October, 850 Russian officers and non-commissioned officers Russians (POWs) who had been transported to Auschwitz, were subjected to death by gassing for the purpose of experimentation with a new type of war gas, which was to have been used on the Eastern front (*jako prób nowego typu gazu bojowego, który ma być u tytu na froncie wschodnim*)” 52.

In subsequent versions of the story, the reason for experimenting on inmates, using war gases, remained the primary motive 53. The propaganda requirements of the Resistance then invented a new theme, that of the extermination of Jews in gas chambers, which were called “*Degasungskammer*”. This term was a mistake for *Begasungskammer*, gas disinfection chamber, referring to a disinfection chamber using hydrocyanic acid gas using a *DEGESCH-Kreislauf* system (standard air recirculation chamber). The combination of gas chambers and shower baths which we have already seen in the letter of 29 August 1942, and which became a recurrent motif of subsequent propaganda, was inspired by two hygienic installations, one still in the design stage, the other in the course of implementation: the first was the *Aufnahmegebäude* (reception building), which included, under the same roof, 19 *Begasungskammern* (disinfection gas chambers) and a shower installation for the inmates, which gave its name to the alleged homicidal gas chambers; the second consisted of two mirror-construction disinfection installations referred to as *Bauwerke* (building sites) 5a and 5b, which likewise consisted of a hydrocyanic acid gas chamber and a washing and shower area, referred to in the related diagrams, as *Gaskammer* and *Wasch- und Brauseraum*, respectively.

This gave rise to a literary theme which developed into a efflorescence of unfounded and contradictory versions finally purged and amended in the final version of the provisional gassing installations, referred to (after the end of the war) as the *Bunker* or “white house” and “little red house”.

50 Soap said made from Jews in Holocaust found in Israel, in: “Haaretz International”, 14 February 2005, available for consultation at: <http://www.haaretzdaily.com/hasen/pages/ShArt.jhtml?itemNo=538795&contrassID=1&subContrassID=9&sbSubCont rassID=0&listSrc=Y>.

51 Idem, p. 18.

52 Obóz koncentracyjny Oświecim w Swietle akt Delegatury Rządu R.P. na Kraj, op. cit., p. 11.

53 See, in this regard, my study cited in note 148.

The invention of the yarn of the “homicidal gassings” in the crematoria at Birkenau was more laborious.

A first draft of the story appeared rather tardily in the paragraph “Death Factory” of the “Periodic Report” (*Sprawozdanie okresowe*) of 5-25 May 1944:

“From May 1943 onwards, ‘komfort’ [Polish expression meaning ‘It’s going better, it’s better organized, i.e., things are proceeding more easily’]. The transports are taken to the ‘ramp of death’ at Rajska 54, and, from there, after the selection, men, women and children are taken to the gas chambers in the recently-built crematoria (we

possess diagrams of the chambers). After the gassing, the naked bodies are transported on a freight elevator located inside the ‘Factory of Death’ to the ground floor, where they are subjected to careful inspection for the enrichment of the Third Reich. The commando of dentists pulls out all gold or platinum teeth – to save time – together with the jaws. The bodies are dissected and searched for swallowed precious objects in the dissection room. There are 4 active crematoria, which process up to 5,000 [bodies] a day. The ovens at Auschwitz have already ‘processed’ 1,500,000 Jews and another 100,000 Poles, Russians and others” 55.

Rather a tardy and insignificant description of colossal gassings of at least one and a half million people! Auschwitz Resistance members realised this right away, and decided to invent a much more detailed version of the fairy tale of the alleged mass extermination. The propaganda machine was thus set in motion and invented a story which, notwithstanding its obvious falsity, became the embryo which later developed into the current “historical truth”: the so-called “Auschwitz Protocols”, a series of reports from inmates who had escaped from Auschwitz between 1943 and 1944.

The most important report was that of Rudolf Vrba (interned under the name of Walter Rosenberg on 30 June 1942, registration number 44070) and Alfred Wetzler (interned on 13 April 1942, registration number 29162), two Slovakian Jews who escaped from Birkenau on 7 April 1944. After reaching Slovakia, they drew up their report at the end of April, which began to circulate as early as during the following month. One of the first versions, in German, was entitled “*Tatsachenbericht über Auschwitz und Birkenau*” (Factual Report on Auschwitz-Birkenau) and dated Geneva, 17 May 1944 56.

The purpose of Vrba and Wetzler’s escape, as the first of them later explained, was that of “telling the world about what was happening at Auschwitz”, to prevent the deportation of the Hungarian Jews to that camp 57.

Vrba also declared that he had been in contact with the inmate from the so-called *Sonderkommando*, Filip Müller, “who became one of [our] most precious sources of information”, and that they had also received “additional information” from him when they discussed the situation in the camp with him in very early 1944 58.

At the Zündel trial in 1985, in which he participated as a witness for the prosecution, Vrba confirmed that he had frequent contacts with members of the *Sonderkommando*, declaring that he had drawn up the diagram of crematoria II and III of Birkenau contained in the Vrba-Wetzler report, based precisely based on this information 59. Filip Müller, the ex-inmate called into question by Rudolf Vrba, confirmed that he had provided Alfred Wetzler, in 1944, with “a diagram of the crematoria with the gas chambers” (*einen Plan der Krematorien mit den Gaskammern*) 60, among other other documents.

54 Rajska is a locality south of Birkenau, called Brzezinka in Polish. Some reports from the Resistance located the Birkenau camp at Rajska instead of at Brzezinka. One of them spoke of the “Hell of Rajska” (*Piekło Rajska*).

Obóz koncentracyjny Oswiecim w Swietle akt Delegatury Rzadu R.P. na Kraj, op. cit., p. 50.

55 APMO, Au D-Ro/91, vol. VII, p. 445.

56 FDRL, WRB, Box no. 61. The report was disseminated by the *Weltzentrale des Hechaluz* of Geneva.

57 Rudolf Vrba e Allan Bestic, *I cannot forgive*. Sidwick and Jackson / Anthony Gibbs and Phillips, London, 1963, p.198.

58 Idem, p. 175.

59 In the District of Ontario. Between: Her Majesty the Queen and Ernst Zündel. Before: The Honourable Judge H.R. Locke and a Jury, vol.VI, p.1479. Rudolf Vrba declared under oath that he was the author of the diagram in question (*idem*, pp. 1260, 1266, 1316).

60 F. Müller, *Sonderbehandlung. Drei Jahre in den Krematorien und Gaskammern von Auschwitz*. Verlag Steinhausen, Munich, 1979, p.193.

But in a book drawn up by him under the pseudonym “Jozef Lánik”, Wetzler once again dished up the story of the “shower gas chambers”:

“The men, who were still busy with their luggage, and who were also stupefied by the kindness of the SS men,

looked at the ceiling suddenly, and saw that the shower heads were emitting minute crystals instead of water. The crystals immediately generated poison gas, which they were now compelled to breathe: it was the powerful, poisonous Zyklon.” 61.

The victims “moved forwards in a line, in groups of five, and entered the shower baths with their children, where the shower heads emitted poison gas instead of water.” 62.

The Vrba-Wetzler report contains an accurate description of crematoria II and III: “At the present time, there are four active crematoria at Birkenau: two big ones, I and II, and two small, III and IV. Those of type-I and II consist of three parts, that is: a) the furnace room; b) the large hall; and c) the gas chamber.

“From the oven room there rises a gigantic chimney around which are grouped nine furnaces, every one of which has four openings. Every opening can receive three corpses of an ordinary size at one time, and, after hour and a half, the bodies are completely burnt. This corresponds to a daily capacity of approximately 2,000 bodies.

Beside the above, there is a large reception hall, arranged in such a way as to resemble the antechamber of a bathing establishment. This hall can contain 2,000 persons and there is apparently a waiting room similar to that on the ground floor. From there, a door and a few steps lead downwards to the gas chamber, which is very long and narrow. The walls of this chamber are also camouflaged with fake shower heads to deceive the victims. The roof is equipped with three trap doors capable of being closed hermetically from the outside. A track leads from the gas chamber to the furnace room”.

This is followed by an explanation of the alleged gassing technique, which is said to have occurred by pouring a “powdered preparation”, contained in “cans” labelled “Cylkon”, through the three “trap doors”. The label on the cans says “For use against vermin”; the poison is produced by a company in Hamburg” 63.

It is now known that both the description of crematoria II and III supplied by Vrba and Wetzler, and their diagram intended to illustrate the same, are completely invented, as shown by a simple comparison with the original diagrams. In short:

- 1) there were 5 crematory ovens in the furnace room, and not 9;
- 2) each oven had 3 muffles (combustion chambers) and not 4,
- 3) the ovens were arranged in a straight line along the longitudinal axis of the oven room, and not groupd in a semi-circle around the chimney;
- 4) the area referred to as an undressing room for the victims (*Leichenkeller 2*) was located in the basement and not on the ground floor;
- 5) the area referred to as the gas chamber (*Leichenkeller 1*) was not located on the ground floor, a little bit lower than the undressing room, but rather, in the basement, on the same level as the undressing room;
- 6) the area refred to as the gas chamber was connected to the oven room by a freight elevator, and not by rails, or a “track”.

Since both the diagram and the description of crematoria II/III contained in the Vrba-Wetzler report are pure fantasy, it follows that the story of the extermination of the Jews in homicidal gas chambers referred to by the authors did *not* originate from inmates forming part of the so-called *Sonderkommando*, but was drawn up *without their knowledge*. This

61 Jozef Lánik, *Was Dante nicht sah*. Röderberg-Verlag, Frankfurt am Main, 1967, pp. 71-72.

62 Idem, p. 259.

63 *The Extermination Camps of Auschwitz (Oswiecim) and Birkenau in Upper Silesia*. FDRL, WRB, Box no. 6, pp. 12- 13.

But this was obviously quite irrelevant for the intended purposes of the propagandists. Throughout 1944, and even afterwards, the Vrba-Wetzler report became the “proof” of the alleged extermination of the Jews in gas chambers, heavily setting the terms of all subsequent propaganda. As Walter Laquer writes, “It was only in 1944, when Rudolf Vrba and Alfred Wetzler entered the scene with highly detailed information on the biggest of all the death camps, that the ‘rumours’ became a certainty” 64.

It was precisely for this reason, i.e., to confer credibility upon propaganda “rumours”, which had, until that time, remained utterly risible 65, that the Vrba and Wetzler “report” was concocted.

The Vrba-Wetzler report also influenced subsequent Auschwitz testimonies, right down to the point of shameless plagiarism. The “Yellow Paper”, published in 1945, containing “Data on the martyrdom of Hungarian Jewry during the 1941-1945 war”, presents the testimony of a certain Henrik Farkas, deported to Auschwitz on 15 June 1944. In the paragraph entitled “The Gas Chambers”, he repeats the information invented by Vrba and Wetzler, claiming, however, to have supplied “a technical description of the gas chambers of the gas chamber based on the annotations of a Jewish engineer (*zsidó mérnök*) employed in a technical task” 66.

Szaja Gertner, a self-proclaimed member of the *Sonderkommando*, reformulated all prior propaganda themes in more fantastic form:

“After the gassing, they opened the door from the other side – the side where nobody could enter – and the windows, and they ventilated [the area] for five minutes. Then the *Kapos* penetrated to the center [*of the room*] and pulled the bodies away from the doors and windows, to be able to work more rapidly. We had thick rubber gloves on our hands, and wads of cotton over our mouths. The bodies emitted gas as soon as they were moved, so that we couldn’t breathe. The tracks led from the doors of the gassing area (*gazowni*) to the oven. We loaded 40 bodies onto the trolley at a time, and the trolley set off immediately towards the grid or grillwork (*na ruszt*). These trolleys tipped into a ditch, where there was a grid, [and] the bodies immediately started to turn red due to the current (*od pr du*) and after ten minutes they were transformed into ashes.

“If the current was too low, it left large bones, however, normally, only small residues were all that was left. In the center there was a device, which they called an “Exhauster”, which blew away the ashes into an adjacent ditch after every cremation. There, a workman filled a barrel with the ashes, and it was hauled up by means of a winch. The ashes were carried away and thrown into the water” 67.

Ada Bimko’s deposition was also freely inspired by the Vrba-Wetzler report.

64 W. Laqueur, *Il terribile segreto*, op. cit., pp. 179-180.

65 Auschwitz Resistance members took another two and a half years before deciding upon Zyklon B as the propagandistic method of extermination; prior to this time, they had spoken simply of “gas”.

66 Sárga könyv. *Adatok a magyar zsidóság háborús szenvédéseiiből 1941-1945*. Hechaluc - Kiadás, Budapest, 1945, pp. 64-65. French translation of the excerpt in: *Révision. Le doux parfum de l’interdit*, no. 55-56, August-September 1994, pp. 24-25.

67 Michał M. Borwicz, Nella Rost, Józef Wulf, *Dokumenty zbrodni i meczennstwa*. (Documents on the Crime and On Martyrdom). Księgi Wojewódzkiej Zydowskiej Komisji Historycznej w Krakowie (Notebooks of the Jewish District Historical Commission of Cracow), Nr. 1. Cracow, 1945, pp. 78-79.

There is an almost identical version translated into English from a text in Yiddish: Shaye Gertner, *Zonderkommando in Birkenau* [sic], in: *Anthology of Holocaust Literature*. Edited by Jacob Glatstein, Israel Knox, Samuel Margoshes. Atheneum, New York, 1968, pp. 141-147.

A recently discovered report drawn up in Kiev on 31 August 1944 by two Soviet POW escapees from Auschwitz (Ananij Silovich Pet'ko and Vladimir Jakovlevich Pegov), shows the subsequent literary developments of the gas chamber stories 68.

Now, the propagandists were at least informed as to the architectonic structure of crematoria II and III, but,

lacking, as they did, any sense of proportion, they attributed a cremation capacity to the ovens which was even more absurd than ever:

“The underground part of the crematorium is divided into two distinct sections: the undressing room and the gas chamber proper. The crematorium is on the ground floor, that is, the ovens, which are coke-fired. Every crematorium has 5 ovens with 3 muffles. Every muffle can take 3-4 bodies at a time. When they are fired up, the cremation time for a load of bodies is from 5-10 minutes; this cremation time was later reduced. The crematoria function at full capacity twenty-four hours [*a day*] and are nevertheless incapable of cremating all the bodies”.

Therefore, on average, crematoria II and III were capable, in total, of cremating a minimum of 20,160 bodies per day, or approximately 30,900 bodies, if we include crematoria IV and V (more than thirty times the theoretical capacity), but, notwithstanding this fact, were unable to cremate all the bodies.

Another report, dated 6 September 1944, by the Soviet army captain Grigorij Jakovlev and other inmate escapees from the camp, informs as follows in relation to the question of just how many bodies would have to have been cremated if the ovens had been able to handle them “all”:

“1,200,000 Hungarian and Rumanian Jews were exterminated at the camp between 16 May and 20 July 1944. Entire transports of Jews from France, Yugoslavia and German-occupied Greece began to arrive at the camp starting at the end of July of this year. The adults were poisoned in gas chambers while the elderly and the children were thrown alive into the fire” **69**.

Apart from the fact that the figure mentioned is almost three times the total number of Jews deported from Hungary between mid-May and the beginning of July (437,402), according to the authors of the report, the number of persons murdered in 65 days (1,200,000 : 65 =) an average of approximately 18,400 persons per day, but the crematoria of Birkenau, which were described as possessing a fictitious cremation capacity of approximately 30,900 bodies per day, were still incapable of cremating all these equally fictitious bodies!

Propaganda obviously requires neither consistency or intelligence.

The report dated 31 August 1944 also introduced another major variant: the “three trap doors” of the Vrba-Wetzler report became the canonical four, while the alleged introduction columns emitting “poison gas” generated from “a sort of power-like substance” -- a description reminiscent of the granular diatomite forming the solid basis of Zyklon B, which the report never mentions -- appear here for the very first time.

Although constituting another step towards the final version of the story, the report still contained certain features requiring some further work: it claimed that the gold teeth were extracted from living inmates (and not their bodies) and there still no mention of the freight elevator: “The bodies were then carried away to the upper room on special trolleys for cremation”.

The grossly propagandistic nature of the report is confirmed by another hare-brained claim:

“During the functioning of the crematoria, flames as high as 15 meters were seen to exit the chimneys”!

4) The propaganda lie consolidates itself: the Soviet and British contribution

The Soviets had already experienced the immense propagandistic power of their images of the liberation of Lublin-Majdanek. When the Red Army reached Lublin-Majdanek on 23 July 1944,

68 The document, in English translation, is available for consultation at:

<http://forum.axishistory.com/viewtopic.php?t=96187&start=0&postdays=0&postorder=asc&highlight=pressac>

69 Idem.

they found, among other things, the gigantic Kori 5-muffle crematory oven, intact, along with warehouses containing approximately 800,000 pairs of shoes. Based on a technically nonsensical “expert report” on the crematory capacity of the oven, and presupposing that the shoes were necessarily proof of murder, the Soviet transformed Lublin-Majdanek into an “extermination camp” with one and half million victims.

The Majdanek Museum later revealed that the camp had a warehouse to which old shoes were sent from all the other camps for recycling purposes. The number of victims of the camp was revised twice downwards by the Majdanek Museum, which first lowered it to 360,000, then to 235,000, and finally (for now) to 78,000. The number of real deaths is about 42,000. As for the “expert report”, suffice it to say that it exaggerated the actual crematory capacity of the single oven by 1000% **70**.

The world’s daily newspapers were soon filled with images of the oven and the mountains of shoes in the camp, considered visible and irrefutable “proof” of the mass extermination allegedly perpetrated there **71**.

The Germans thus, to their cost, experienced the suggestive power of images. For this reason, before abandoning Auschwitz camp, they blew up the crematoria at Birkenau and burned the warehouse barracks in the *Effektenlager*, containing inmate personal effects, burning them all except for six.

By contrast, the Germans left practically intact and in Soviet hands, the entire archive of the *Zentralbauleitung*, with all the alleged “criminal traces” of the alleged homicidal gas chambers”, were left practically intact and in Soviet hands, not to mention approximately 8,000 inmates **72**, all of them ready to serve as alleged “eyewitnesses” to the alleged homicidal “gassings” (all of whom could easily have been gassed and cremated by the SS, according to Holocaust orthodoxy, in the first week of January 1945 in crematorium V, the only one left standing).

Having already deluded themselves with propaganda images of the crematory ovens and alleged gas chambers in the same building, the Soviets presented the disinfestation chamber of so-called *Kanada I* (*Bauwerk 28*), which they presented as a homicidal “gas chamber” with gas-tight door and peephole “to watch the progress of the extermination”, as stated in a Polish photo caption in 1980 **73**, in addition to the cans of Zyklon B and the gas masks stored in the warehouse in that building.

In their new propaganda museum of horrors, the Soviets exhibited the more than 7 tons of human hair found at Auschwitz, corresponding, according to them, assuming 50 gr or hair per person, to approximately 140,000 women, which had been “cut off the bodies, that is, probably in the crematoria and, in particular, after the killing with gas, but prior to cremation”, as claimed by the witnesses Tauber, Madelbaum and Dragon **74**.

This allegation was echoed by the Auschwitz Museum, which claiming that the hair “originated from 140,000 persons murdered in Auschwitz concentration camp” **75**.

But more than 400,000 inmates were registered at Auschwitz, including more than 131,000 women **76**. It is furthermore well known that the collection of hair for purposes of industrial recycling was

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70 For further details on the matter, please see my study in collaboration with J. Graf *Concentration Camp Majdanek. A Historical and Technical Study*. Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago, 2003.

71 The world’s greatest “expert” on Auschwitz, Robert Jan Van Pelt, remains inexplicably anchored to the old figure of 360,000 deaths, and still believes, incredibly, that the enormous mountain of shoes constitute “*prima facie* proof of extermination”! R.J. van Pelt, *The Case for Auschwitz. Evidence from the Irving Trial*, op. cit., pp. 157-159.

72 A. Strzelecki, *Die Liquidation des KL Auschwitz*, in: *Studien zur Geschichte des Konzentrations- und Vernichtungslagers Auschwitz*, op. cit., vol. V, p. 51

73 *KL Auschwitz. Fotografie dokumentalne*. Krajowa Agencja Wydawnicza, Varsavia, 1980, p. 156.

74 “Record”. 8 March 1945. GARF, 7021-108-10, p. 73.

75 A. Strzelecki, *Die Verwertung der Leichen der Opfer*, in: *Studien zur Geschichte des Konzentrations- und Vernichtungslagers Auschwitz*, op. cit., vol. II, p. 497.

practiced in all concentration camps, including male hair **77**, and all inmate was cut at regular intervals, as soon as it reached a certain standard length.

A letter from the Sachsenhausen camp administration to the administration of the local infirmary (which had always proven itself resistant to the procedure) dated 11 October 1944 warned that “it is not a question of the inmates’ appearance, but inmate hair has important uses in the war economy”. The last delivery of hair, stated the letter, weighed 275 kg **78**.

As for Auschwitz, we do not even know how long it took to collect that much hair, so that it could also originate, for example, from the 135,000 inmates still in the camp in August 1944 **79**.

Therefore, the allegation that the 7,000 kg of hair originated from 140,000 gassed persons, and that the hair constitutes “proof” of the mass gassings, is absolutely groundless.

Anxious, on the one hand, to avert the eyes of the world from the authors of the real “crimes against peace” (for example, the division of Poland and the aggressive war against Finnland), and “crimes against humanity” (for example, the massacres at Katyn and Winniza, upon which the Germans had published two voluminously documented White Papers) committed by themselves, the Soviets were now backed into the corner of having to stupefy and terrify the world by attributing to the Germans an even more horrendous massacre than the one dreamed up by the Soviets at Lublin-Majdanek: an immense massacre of 4 million people.

They therefore created a State Commission for the Investigation of German War Crimes, which then entrusted numerous sub-committees of “experts” and “expert witnesses” with the task of concocting an “historical” cloak for Soviet state propaganda.

The Soviet Commission’s essential contribution to the success of the propaganda lie of the “gassing technique” described by Vrba and Wetzler and subsequent reports lay in integrating them into the real architectonic context of the crematoria. The archives of the *Zentralbauleitung* contained in fact dozens of diagrams of the crematoria, which were shown during the interrogations of witnesses remaining at Auschwitz, such as Henryk Tauber. In this way, the witnesses were able to orient themselves in retelling the story already told by Vrba and Wetzler without their grossly stupid architectonic blunders.

Witnesses who had already been transferred away from Auschwitz, by contrast, were unable to benefit from the opportunities offered by these diagrams and continued to commit the same or similar grossly stupid architectonic blunders.

Thus, Miklos Nyiszli, in relation to crematorium II/III, spoke of 15 individual ovens arranged in a hall 150 meters long, while the actual oven room measured 30 meters long and contained 5 ovens with 3 muffles each; the alleged gas chamber, also 30 meters long, was, for him, 200 meters long, and the small freight elevator was quadrupled into four powerful freight elevators, to say nothing of all his other fantasies **80**.

Sigismund Bendel, by contrast, claimed that the alleged gas chamber measured 10 x 4 meters, while in reality it measured 30 x 7, while he reduced the height of the ceiling from 2.41 meters to 1.60 meters **81**. And yet both men were self-proclaimed “eyewitness” members of the so-called *Sonderkommando*, who pretended to have spent several months in the Birkenau crematoria!

According to Eugon Kogon, “the hydrocyanic acid gas flowed out from the shower heads and from the ventilation pillars (*Ventilatorenpfeilern*)” **82**. He based his testimony on a certain Janda Weiss, who claimed:

“There were three colums for the ventilators, through which the gas was poured” **83**.

77 The directive of the SS-WVHA dated 16 August 1942 established the minimum length of male hair to be cut as 20 cm. URSS-511.

78 GARF, 7021-104-8, p. 1.

79 AGK, NTN, 155, p. 96.

80 See my study, "Medico ad Auschwitz": *Anatomia di un falso*. La Sfinge, Parma, 1988.

81 See my study, *Auschwitz: due false testimonianze*. La Sfinge, Parma, 1986.

82 E. Kogon, *Der SS-Staat. Das System der deutschen Konzentrationslager*. Verlag Karl Alber, Munich, 1946, p. 132.

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17

Still in 1961, in the 68th hearing of the Eichmann Trial (7 June), the witness Yehuda Bakon still clung to this same mendacious version of the tale. With reference of the pillars of the alleged gas chambers in crematoria II and III, he declared that "underneath, there were the ventilators as well as apertures so as to clean the area with water. Later, when they [the Germans] dismantled the crematoria, we could see the ventilators distinctly" **84**.

But the aeration and disaeration ventilators were not located in the alleged "gas chamber", but rather, in the attic of the crematorium **85**.

According to the testimony of Isaak Egon Ochshorn, by contrast, the crematorium (singular) "had hundreds of ovens" **86**.

Having invented the extermination procedure, it was now necessary to invent the number of victims. One of the many Soviet sub-committees of "experts" went to work and prepared the "scientific" underpinning for the fateful total of 4 million victims between 14 February and 8 March 1945, based on absurd and fanciful data,. The concoction of this fairy tale involved an inextricable connivance between "witnesses" and "experts", the latter of which enabled the former to attribute a technically nonsensical capacity to the crematory ovens at Birkenau, based on ridiculous calculations.

The Soviets elaborated their Auschwitz propaganda in a "Communication of the Extraordinary State Commission for the Investigation and Research into the Crimes of the German-fascist invaders and Their Accomplices", which was published by *Pravda* on 7 May 1945 and immediately translated into various languages. The English translation appeared as early as 29 May 1945⁸⁷; a French translation also appeared in 1945 **88**. The Soviet report was later introduced into evidence by the Nuremberg Tribunal under Document no. URSS-008.

Between 17 September and 17 November 1945, the British collaborated in the trial of Josef Kramer and 44 other SS men. Kramer, an ex-SS-*Hauptsturmführer*, had been commandant of the Auschwitz II-Birkenau camp and then the Bergen-Belsen camp. For this reason, Auschwitz was also under discussion at the Belsen Trial. The investigatory phase of the proceedings, as regards the alleged "gas chambers" at Auschwitz, were based on a curious syncretism between the Vrba- Wetzler report and the story of the gas chamber shower baths. This is how they were described by Colonel Backhouse, who represented the prosecution:

"Then [the victims] were taken naked into the next room, where there were five rows of fake shower heads. The door was closed. The room could contain 1,000 people at a time. The whole area was air-tight: they opened the gas and these persons were deliberately gassed and killed. On the other side, there was a door, a trolley and rails, and the bodies were loaded on the trolley and transported straight to the crematorium" **89**.

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83 *The Buchenwald Report*. Translated, edited and with an introduction by David A. Hackett. Westview Press, Boulder, San Francisco, Oxford, 1995, p. 350.

84 State of Israel. Ministry of Justice. *The Trial of Adolf Eichmann. Record of Proceedings in the District Court of Jerusalem*. Gerusalemme, 1993, vol. III, p. 1251.

85 See the original diagrams of their location in: J.-C. Pressac, *Le macchine dello sterminio. Auschwitz 1941-1945*. Feltrinelli, Milan, 1994, documents 14 and 15 are not in the text.

86 NO-1934, Ochshorn declaration on the massacres of jews in concentration camps. September 1945.

87 *Statement of the Extraordinary State Committee For the Ascertaining and Investigation of Crimes Committed by the German-fascist Invaders and Their Associates*, in; “Information Bulletin, Embassy of the Soviet Socialist Republics (Washington, D.C.), vol. 5, no. 54, 29 May 1945.

88 *Oswiecim (Auschwitz). Le camp où les nazis assassinèrent plus de quatre millions d'hommes. Communiqué de la Commission extraordinaire d'Etat pour l'investigation et la recherche des crimes commis par les envahisseurs germano-fascistes et leurs complices*, in : “Forfaits hitlériens, documents officiels “. Ed. des Trois Collines, Geneva- Paris, 1945.

89 *Trial of Josef Kramer and Forty-Four Others (The Belsen Trial)*, op. cit., p. 26.

Although the British investigators were well aware of the “historical” framework established by Soviet propaganda90, many Jewish witnesses invented stories so improbable as to induce the defense attorneys – British officers! – to accuse them openly of perjury **91**. For example, Major Cranfield declared:

“The Nazis awakened racial passions all over the world, and I consider it neither unnatural nor surprising that these three young Jews [*the witnesses*] are vindictive with regards to their former guards and seek to revenge themselves upon them”.

He considered their testimony “totally unreliable” **92**. The blindness of the witnesses was such that a few inmates were falsely accused of being criminal SS men by other inmates **93**.

As for Auschwitz, the most important witnesses were Sigismund Bendel and Ada Bimko, who, as we have seen, made statements which are totally unreliable. Other witnesses gave proof of a no less vigorous imagination.

Particular mention is due to Regina Bialek and Sophia Litwinska. The first stated that there were seven gas chambers at Auschwitz, one of which was underground. The trucks were able to enter this gas chamber – an area of approximately 120 square meters -- directly, by means of a sort of ramp. The witness was unloaded with a group of inmates destined to be gassed, but just as she was about to die, her number was called out by Dr. Mengele and she was taken out of the gas chamber! **94**.

Sophia Litwinska experienced a similar miracle. She, too, was taken out of the gas chamber, which resembled a shower bath, with shower heads, towels and even mirrors. Suddenly, she saw “smoke” enter through a high window and was just about to die when she heard someone calling her name. It was none other than *SS-Obersturmführer Hößler* (head of the protective custody camp at Auschwitz I), who took her out and took her away on a motorcycle! **95**.

This is to say nothing of the testimony of Jolan Holdost, who saw 300-400 persons who were unable to enter the gas chamber at Auschwitz I, because there was no more room, so they were soaked with oil and burned alive! **96**.

The idea of burning people alive as a propaganda motif appeared towards the end of April 1943, to render the whole set design even more horrifying than ever, soon transformed into the burning of conscious adults and finally children **97**. A few months later, the process of literary evolution had been completed. The following notice appears in the “Review of the Most Important Events in the Country. Weekly Report of 27 August 1943”

(*Przegląd najważniejszych wydarzeń kraju. Meldunek tygodniowy z dn. 27. VIII 43 r.*):

“5,000 bodies are burnt in the crematorium every day, but since there are more, the remaining [Jews] are burned alive in the ‘eternal fire’ in the open air at Birkenau – living children are thrown alive into the fire.” **98**.

The Belsen Trial added not a great deal to the propagandistic framework already sketched out by the Soviets, but confirmed its essential principles. As Robert Jan van Pelt remarks, “[with the Belsen Trial, the gas chambers at

Auschwitz became a formal element of historiography.” **99**.

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90 For example: the Soviet film on Auschwitz was accepted by the Nuremberg Tribunal as Exhibit no. 125.

Idem, p. 231.

91 Idem, p. 76, 82, 89, 141, 244, 518, 519, 524, 535.

92 Idem, p. 244.

93 Such was the case of former inmates Oskar Schmitz and Heinrich Schreirer. Idem, pp. 289-290 and 334.

94 Idem, p. 657.

95 Idem, pp. 79-80.

96 Idem, p. 666.

97 See in this regard, my study *The Bunkers of Auschwitz. Black propaganda versus History*. Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago, 2005, pp. 51-69.

98 Idem, p. 120.

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Thus, even the “Free” West had its Auschwitz Trial and its “convergent proof” of the reality of the “gas chambers” and the figure of the 4 million victims, statistically “confirmed” by Ada Bimko:

“I have examined the documents on the numbers of cremated persons and I confirm that the documents show that at least 4 million people were cremated in the camp” **100**.

The scientific exploitation of the fairy tale of the “gas chambers” by the British and the Americans, continued the intensified over the course of subsequent trials, all of which were intended to make people forget other crimes, no less horrendous, perpetrated by the Soviets, began with the Belsen Trial, as clearly shown by Maurice Bardèche:

“To excuse the crimes committed in [*their*] conduct of the war, it was absolutely necessary to discover other, even more serious crimes, elsewhere. It was absolutely necessary that British and American bombers appear as the Terrible Swift Sword of the Almighty. The Allies had no other choice. If they had not solemnly affirmed this claim, if they had failed to prove themselves the saviors of Humanity, no matter how, they would have been unmasked as nothing but mass murderers themselves. If people ever stopped believing that the Germans were monsters, they might turn around and take note of the Japanese and German cities destroyed by mass fire-bombing. There is therefore an obvious aspect of self-interested, self-serving face-saving in all British and American propaganda, and, to a lesser extent, in Soviet propaganda as well, in upholding the theory of German criminality” **101**.

All that is needed is to substitute “German crimes” and “German barbarity” by means of “gas chambers” in the reality of which Bardèche actually believed **102**, and we can understand the roots of the propaganda industry which has raged for over sixty years now, in comparison to which the “Holocaust Industry” appears downright amateurish.

5) Propaganda lies become “history”

In May 1945, the Soviet War Crimes Commission was replaced by a Polish Investigatory Commission, responsible for conducting the preliminary investigations with a view to future trials of SS members. This task was entrusted to Judge Jan Sehn, who carried it out assiduously. He was the author of the first “history” of Auschwitz **103**, based on the Höss Trial (11-29 March 1947) and a trial of the camp garrison (25 November-16 December 1947).

As regards the alleged extermination installations, Jan Sehn based his findings upon the “technical” “expert report” drawn up by Roman Dawidowski, a certified engineer, which report was officially approved on 26 September 1946 **104**. The expert enthusiastically approved the Soviet propaganda findings: not content with

merely repeating the story of the 4 million deaths **105**, he added another, personal absurdity, supported, as always, by “scientific calculations”:

“In the light of the concordant testimonies of the witnesses, the [undersigned] expert is of the opinion that the productivity of the gas chambers in the four cremation complexes at Auschwitz camp amounted to approximately 60,000 persons in 24 hours. This figure is based on the following calculation: according to the statements of the witnesses, 3,000 persons at time were crammed into the gas chambers in each [of the four] crematoria. The undressing procedure, in a climate of violent threats, lasted 30 minutes, while the actual gassing time lasted an average of 25-30 minutes, while

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99 R.J. van Pelt, *The Case for Auschwitz. Evidence from the Irving Trial*, op. cit., p. 244.

100 *Trial of Josef Kramer and Forty-Four Others (The Belsen Trial)*, op. cit., p. 740.

101 M Bardèche, *Nuremberg ou la terre promise*. Les Sept couleurs, Parigi, 1948, pp. 18-19.

102 Idem, p. 128, 159, 187, 194.

103 J. Sehn, *Obóz koncentracyjny i zagłady Oświecim*, in: “Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Niemieckich w Polsce”, I, Poznan, 1946, pp. 63-130.

104 “Protocol”. Höss Trial, vol. 11, pp. 1-57.

105 Idem, p. 52.

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the process of clearing out the chambers took 4 hours for each gassing. In total, therefore, to carry out the gassing of a chamber-load of people took 5 hours, that is, the productivity of the gas chambers located in each crematorium complex amounted to approximately 15,000 people. For the 4 cremation complexes put together, therefore, this means a capacity of 60,000 people in 24 hours.” **106**.

The expert added that, in 1944, Birkenau’s crematory capacity was 18,000 bodies per day – 8,000 in the crematoria and 10,000 in the “cremation ditches” – but was capable of reaching 24,000 “in the event of maximum utilisation of all the installations” **107**.

One wonders why the SS spent 1,400,000 *Reichsmark* for the Birkenau crematoria **108** if they could have obtained a higher crematory capacity by just digging a few holes in the ground!

The absurd story invented by Dawidowski was repeated in the judgement of the Höss Trial, as well as in the indictment of the trial of the camp garrison: both trials reaffirmed that the exterminatory capacity of the alleged gas chambers was 60,000 people a day **109**, while the fairy tale of the 10,000 bodies per day cremated in the “cremation ditches” still passes for official Holocaust “proven fact” today **110**.

Jan Sehn never quite reached the same total himself, but was more Soviet than the Soviets in his own way. In fact, he even wrote that the (fantastic) crematory capacity of all four Birkenau crematoria was 4,380,000 “bodies” (*zwok*). One witness, a certain Stanek, moreover stated that 3,850,000 inmates reached Auschwitz by train between 1942 and 1944. The following is Jan Sehn’s conclusion:

“If we consider the camp’s remaining year of its existence as well as the great number of transports by truck, it appears perhaps very probable that the number of victims of Auschwitz camp amounted in reality to approximately five million (*koo piciu milionów*)” **111**.

Sehn’s writings remained the sole “history” of Auschwitz for over forty years, while the nascent science of serious Holocaust historiography remained a fugitive from justice. Sehn’s writings were promptly translated into English **112** and later into French **113**, becoming the historical paradigm *par excellence*, reaffirmed by Jan Sehn in 1956 with the republication of his writings in book form **114**, followed by a translation into French **115** and English **116**.

Historians behind the Iron Curtain distinguished themselves by their supine acquiescence faced with Soviet and Polish propaganda, which they attempted to equip with a “scholarly” veneer”.

One of the first books in this genre, published by Filip Friedman in 1945, restricted itself to acting as a sounding board for Soviet propaganda 117. Most typical is the case of Ota Kraus and Erich Kulka, authors of a book on “The Death Factory” of Auschwitz, published in

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106 Idem, p. 51.

107 Idem.

108 According to the cost estimate dated 28 October 1942.

109 AGK, NTN, 146z (judgement of the Höss Trial), p. 31; GARF, 7021-108-39, p. 75 (indictment in the trial against the camp garrison).

110 F. Piper, *Gas Chambers and Crematoria*, op. cit., pp. 173-174.

111 Jan Sehn, *Obóz koncentracyjny i zagłady Oświęcim*, op. cit., p. 125 and 128.

112 *German Crimes in Poland*. Varsavia, 1946, vol. I, *Concentration and extermination camp at Oświęcim (Auschwitz- Birkenau)*, pp. 25-92.

113 *Les Crimes Allemands en Pologne*. Varsavia, 1948, vol. I, *Le Camp de concentration et d'extermination d'Oświęcim*, pp. 57-99.

114 J. Sehn, *Obóz koncentracyjny Oświęcim-Brzezinka (Auschwitz-Birkenau)*. Wydawnictwo Prawnicze, Varsavia, 1956.

115 J. Sehn, *Le camp de concentration d' Oświęcim-Brzezinka (Auschwitz-Birkenau)*. Wydawnictwo Prawnicze, Warsaw 1957.

116 J. Sehn, *Oświęcim-Brzezinka (Auschwitz-Birkenau) Concentration camp*. Wydawnictwo Prawnicze, Varsavia, 1961.

117 F. Friedman, *To jest Oświęcim*. Cracovia, 1945. Trad. inglese: *This was Oświęcim. The history of a murder camp*, The United Jewish Relief Appeal, London, 1946.

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1946 118 and revised in 1956, followed by another edition the next year 119. In this books, the authors attempt to provide historical justification, based on fictitious transports, for the Soviet propaganda lie of the 4 million deaths (based on a theoretical basis, i.e., the presumed capacity of the crematoria and so-called *Bunkers* of Birkenau): they simply invented transports of unregistered Jews allegedly gassed upon arrival, reaching a total of 3,500,000 persons, adding the alleged 320,000 dead registered inmates and the presumed 15,000 deaths during the evacuation of the camp, finally concluding that the figure adopted by themselves was not far off the Soviet figure of 4 million! 120.

Particularly juicy was their description of the ovens of crematoria II/III:

“The cremation installations are located in the basement of the crematorium building, equipped with 15 ovens on three levels 121. On the lower level, the air was blown by electrical ventilators, on the central level was the true and proper combustion chamber for the fuel, while on the upper level there were sturdy grids of refractory clay upon which two or three bodies were placed, having been transported hither by means of a trolley on a freight elevator” 122.

This is how the two “historians” interpreted and explained the German expression *Dreimuffelofen*, three muffle oven, as an “oven on three levels”, although – even more incredibly – they had just published a photograph of the three-muffle ovens in the Birkenau crematorium on the preceding page!

This work, via the German translation and subsequent translation into English 123, became a keystone of Holocaust bibliography on Auschwitz. Sehn’s chief claim to fame is a volume entitled *German Crimes in Poland*. Dino A. Brugioni and Robert G. Poirier were merely following in his footsteps with their imaginative interpretation of the air photographs of Birkenau 124.

The transformation of Soviet and Polish propaganda into “history” was obviously the principal task of the Auschwitz Museum, which really got to work in the 1950s. Its first and most important contribution was the authorship of the “Calendar of Events in Auschwitz-Birkenau Concentration Camp”, which was published in Polish between 1958 and 1963 and in German between 1959 and 1964 **125**, a hastily-prepared “classic” oozing with indignation over the fate of unregistered inmates without the slightest proof.

In one of the first official histories of the camp, published by the Auschwitz Museum in 1977, Franciszek Piper, echoing *in toto* the official Soviet propaganda line, wrote:

“In almost five years of the camp’s existence, 4,000,000 people perished from disease, executions and massacres in the gas chambers. This figure includes approximately 340,000 out of more than 400,000 registered prisoners, men, women and children” **126**.

Not even the mastodontic Frankfurt Trial of former Auschwitz personnel, held between 20 December 1963 and 20 August 1965, succeeded in laying the foundations for authentic historiography, since it was based almost exclusively on “eyewitness testimony”. The grounds for the judgement acknowledged that the trial was conducted without regard to the normal procedures followed in any ordinary murder trial,

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118 O. Kraus, E. Schön [Kulka], *Továrnna na smrt*. Prague, 1946.

119 Idem, *Továrnna na smrt. Dokument o Osvetimi*. Nase Vojsko- SPB, Prague, 1957. German translation: *Die Todesfabrik*. Kongress-Verlag, Berlin, 1958.

120 Idem, pp. 203-204.

121 The adjective employed, “trístupnový” means “with three steps”, or “in three stages”.

122 O. Kraus, E. Kulka, *Továrnna na smrt. Dokument o Osvetimi*, op. cit., p. 145.

123 *The Death Factory*. Pergamon Press, Oxford-New York, 1966.

124 D. A. Brugioni, R. G. Poirier, *The Holocaust Revisited: A Retrospective Analysis of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Extermination Complex*. Central Intelligence Agency, Washington D.C., 1979, p. 1.

125 D. Czech, *Kalendarz wydarzeń obozów koncentracyjnych Oświecim-Brzezinka*. Zeszyty Oswiecimskie, nos. 2,3,4,6,7. German translation: *Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz-Birkenau*. Hefte von Auschwitz, no. 2,3,4,6,7,8.

126 *Auschwitz (Oświecim) Camp hitlérien d'extermination*. A cura di J. Buszko. Editions Interpress, Warsaw, 1978, p. 134. Edizione originale: *Hitlerowski obóz masowej zagłady*. Interpress, Warsaw, 1977.

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in which, “... the Tribunal possesses the body of the victim, the autopsy records, an expert report showing the cause of death, the estimated time and/or date of death, and at least a rough idea of the type of murder weapon.

It may well possess the murder weapon itself, fingerprints identifying the culprit, casts or photographs of footprints left by the murderer in entering the victim’s residence, in addition to many other details leading to a very clear indication of guilt on the part of the accused. All this is missing in the present trial. We have no absolute starting point relating to even one single murder; all we have is eyewitness testimony. These eyewitness testimonies, however, are not as exact and precise as is required in an ordinary murder trial [retranslation]” **127**.

Thus, a court lacking the basic tecnico-juridical instruments required to judge a single murder trial, was permitted to sit in judgement over a mass extermination, which was, in turn, nothing a series of individual murders!

The eyewitnesses, in turn, under the inevitable influence of 18 years of Soviet and pseudo-legal propaganda, were in no position to question that same propaganda tradition. Even the judges realized this. The documentary evidence was scanty to the extreme, and even the most emphatic eyewitness statements -- those which appeared most firmly grounded in fact -- were, in reality, “not very plausible in many ways and should not always be considered to correspond to object reality” **128**, an elegant way of saying that it was untrue.

Holocaust historiography only began to concern itself seriously with Auschwitz in 1989, thanks to Jean-Claude Pressac, who published the book cited above, *Auschwitz: Technique and operation of the gas chambers*. Pressac rejected the old Holocaust imposture, employing a new methodology demonstrating the “complete bankruptcy” of all past Holocaust historiography, “based, for the most part, on eyewitness testimonies according to the mood of the moment, truncated to form arbitrary truths and sprinkled with a few German documents of disparate value and without any connection between them” [retranslation] 129.

This respective judgement fully mirrored the reality of the facts, as demonstrated by works such as that by Georges Wellers 130 or that, more pretentious, of Hermann Langbein 131.

With Pressac, Holocaust historiography reached its peak – a peak simultaneously demonstrating the commencement of its inexorable decline. Having established, at least by intention, the primacy of documents over eyewitness testimony, and having grasped (although in a completely inadequate manner) the technical problems involved in the alleged mass extermination, Pressac dealt the first hard blow to the official propaganda story, stripping away the basis for what had, until that time, been an indisputable assumption, not subject to question: the pretense that the Birkenau camp was built as an extermination camp, and that its two larger crematoria were designed with homicidal gas chambers from the very start. Pressac provided revisionist researchers with such a huge mass of arguments that Pressac came under suspicion of being a crypto-revisionist himself, subjected, in the end, to solemn ex-communication as a heretic by the Holocaust Establishment – an ex-communication so totally ferocious that it lasted until his death, which occurred on 23 July 2003 in total media silence.

The argumentative structure of Pressac’s work was patterned on Dawidowski’s expert report, which had already listed the majority of Pressac’s “criminal traces”,

127 Bernd Naumann, *Auschwitz. Bericht über die Strafsache gegen Mulka u.a. vor dem Schwurgericht Frankfurt*. Athäneum-Verlag, Frankfurt am Main, Bonn, 1965, p. 524.

128 Idem, p. 525.

129 J.-C. Pressac, *Auschwitz: Technique and operation of the gas chambers*, op. cit., p. 264.

130 *Les chambres à gaz ont existé. Des documents, des témoignages, des chiffres*. Gallimard, Paris, 1981.

131 *Menschen in Auschwitz*. Europaverlag, Vienna, 1987.

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in addition to diagrams and photographs later rediscovered and published by French historians, but critically reformulated in a way that would have been impossible a short time before.

Pressac’s work indicated both the peak and, simultaneously, the decline of Auschwitz Holocaust historiography in another sense, as well, after which it regressed into a rudimentary historical-propagandistic fog characterised by the exploitation of testimony, accepted without criticism; a formal assumption of the documents, torn from their historical, bureaucratic and technical context; and the repudiation of science as the criterion of evaluation in judging the reliability of both the testimony and the documents; all the while spiced up with an impossible “convergence of evidence” according to which, if three “independent” and “convergent” proofs of a lie are presented together, the lie then becomes the truth!

Putting it in a nutshell, Holocaust historiography has fallen off a cliff, from Pressac to van Pelt. The inconsistency of Holocaust documentation with regards to the gas chambers was openly acknowledged in late 1996 by the French novelist and historian Jacques Baynac.

After noting that “no acceptable testimony exists as indisputable proof” and that in response to the revisionist request for documents proving the reality of the gas chambers “we must remain silent due to the absence of documents”, he stated:

“We must either abandon the primacy of the archives in favour of the primacy of testimonies, and, in this case, we must disqualify history as a science and immediately requalify it as an art. Or we must maintain the primacy of the archives and, in this case, we must acknowledge that the absence of traces implies the inability directly to establish the reality of the existence of the homicidal gas chambers” 132.

This is a perfect explanation of the real nature of contemporary Auschwitz Holocaust historiography: a simple extension of Soviet propaganda equipped with “scholarly” pretensions.

6) The collapse of the propaganda lie of the 4 million and the consequences

With the collapse of the Soviet system, the Soviet lackeys at the Auschwitz Museum, who had always prostrated themselves in obsequious veneration before the fateful figure of the 4 million right up to the very day beforehand -- since the said figure was always considered ridiculous in the non-Communist West 133 -- decided that the time had come to perform a noisy revision downwards in their version of total number of deaths, which was therefore first reduced to 1,500,000 (now inscribed on the famous stone slabs at Birkenau), and then to 1,100,000. Subsequent official revisions, right down to a provisional total of 510,000 victims (Fritjof Meyer), are only the inevitable consequence of fleeting glimpses -- obviously heterodoxical -- of the scientific imposture pervading all official Holocaust history.

This collapse had a disastrous effect on Holocaust propaganda history. As noted elsewhere, the testimonies and the propaganda figure of the 4 million deaths were closely interlinked from the very outset, so that invalidation of the testimonies implied an invalidation of the total figure of deaths, while invalidation of the total figure of deaths would have implied the invalidation of the testimonies, and, consequently, the invalidation of the theory of mass extermination!

In other words, if the testimonies were true, then the 4-million death figure should be true, too. If this is false, then the testimonies must be false, too. And if the testimonies are false as to elimination of the corpus delicti [i.e., corpses, or evidence] why should they be true as to the essential aspect of the alleged extermination itself? 134.

With renunciation of the propaganda figure of the 4 million deaths, the official historiography itself has in fact triggered this irreversible process of historiographical invalidation.

132 J. Baynac, *Faute de documents probants sur les chambres à gaz, les historiens équivent le débat*, in: “Le Nouveau Quotidien” (Lousanne), 3 September 1996, p. 14.

133 “...the figure of four million is ridiculous”: G. Reitlinger. *La soluzione finale. Il tentativo di sterminio degli Ebrei d’Europa 1939-1945*. Il Saggiatore, Milan, 1965, p. 559.

134 See my study, *Il numero dei morti di Auschwitz. Vecchie e nuove imposture*, in: Heft von Auschwitz, Effepi, Genoa 2004.

A few “survivors”, by contrast, are contributing to this invalidation on their own account. In an interview published in a French newspaper on 20 January 2005, an Italian witness from the so-called *Sonderkommando*, Shlomo Venezia, declared:

“There are five ovens with three apertures in each oven. They threw the bodies in, two at a time. The ovens worked without ever stopping. There were two squads working in twelve hour shifts. It took three days to burn 1,500 bodies” 135.

This means that crematoria II and III, each equipped with 5 three-muffle ovens, had a crematory capacity of 500 cremations per day, respectively. But in his interrogatory rendered before the Soviets on 27 - 28 February 1945, the “eyewitness” par excellence, Henryk Tauber, stated that the average cremation capacity of each of the above

installations was 4,320 bodies per day **136**. Venezia thus unexpectedly reveals himself to be a “negationist”! **137**

7) Historians rush to provide support for the official propaganda

The propaganda fantasies described in the paragraphs above have vexed not a few Holocaust historians: how does one explain the fact that the underground Resistance movement, which had trusted members in every sector and every agency of the camp, failed to draw up a precise, detailed report on the alleged gas chambers at Auschwitz? Why did they wait more than two years to draw up a reasonably decent record of the alleged mass gassings? Why was this record itself merely a product of fantasy? And why did the most fantastic fantasies continue to circulate for two whole years before the final story took shape (as well as long afterwards)?

In response, Pierre-Vidal Naquet invented the theory that these fantasies were “like a shadow projected by reality, like an extension of reality” **138**; others picked up the gauntlet of demonstrating this theory, even to the point of researching the most improbable explanations. Let us examine the most significant examples, beginning with the Vrba- Wetzler report.

Current Holocaust historiography is well aware of the falsity of the report, but attempt painfully to justify it.

Jean-Claude Pressac hypothesized that the above mentioned description was the result of direct observations of the crematoria by Vrba and Wetzler from the outside, up until March 1943, plus indirect information originating from inmates working in the mysterious *Bunkers* of Birkenau, which could not have originated later than 17 December 1942, the date of their alleged gassing [sic] [i.e., the gassing of the *Sonderkommando* members who provided them with the information?] [?] **139**.

Robert Jan van Pelt, by contrast, wrote that “given the conditions under which the information was obtained, the lack of professional training in the camp relating to the architecture of of Vrba and Wetzlar **140** and the situation under which the report was compiled, it would indeed be remarkable if the report did not contain errors” **141**.

In reality, the essential part of the report, that relating to the extermination in gas chambers, does not merely contain “errors”, it is all wrong. The conjectures of Pressac and Van Pelt are, as we have already seen, are contradicted by both Vrba and Müller, the self-proclaimed source of their information as to the diagram contained in the report.

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135 *Le Point*, 20 January 2005, p. 15-16.

136 Record of interrogation of Henryk Tauber dated 27-28 February 1945. GARF, 7021-108-13, p. 1-12. The figure is deduced from the data provided by Tauber.

137 Still in 2002, Venezia stated that the above mentioned crematory capacity was 550-600 bodies per day. See my analysis of his testimony in *Olocausto: dilettanti a convegno*. Effepi, Genoa 2002, p. 156.

138 P. Vidal-Naquet, *Tesi sul revisionismo*, in: “Rivista di storia contemporanea”, Turin, 1983, pp. 7-8.

139 J.-C. Pressac, *Auschwitz: Technique and operation of the gas chambers*, op. cit., pp. 459-468. See, in this regard, my article *J.-C. Pressac and the War Refugee Board Report*, in: “The Journal of Historical Review”, winter 1990- 91, vol. 10, no. 4, pp. 461-485.

140 Van Pelt always uses this erroneous spelling.

141 R.J. van Pelt, *The Case for Auschwitz. Evidence from the Irving Trial*, op. cit., p. 151.

In the logic of the “projected shadow of reality”, Robert Jan van Pelt even attempted to justify Poljevoi’s lie, while acknowledging they belong to the “category of myth”:

“One can only speculate on the source of the Polevoi’s claim that the extermination installation contained an electrical conveyor belt between the gas chamber and so-called ‘blast furnace’. In crematoria II and III, the underground gas chamber was linked to the oven room by a freight elevator. It is possible that, in the confusion

of languages that existed at Auschwitz upon liberation, Polevoi had misunderstood references to the electrical freight elevator” 142.

But there were also excellent interpreters in that “confusion of languages”. The alleged misunderstanding (between “freight elevator” and “conveyor belt”) is, quite the contrary, simply an insult to the intelligence of the Soviet journalist.

Van Pelt continues his justification as follows:

“As regards the blast furnace, the most reliable source is patent application T 58240, filed by the crematory oven construction firm J.A. Topf & Söhne of Erfurt, for a ‘Crematory oven for bodies with continual functioning for intensive use’, archived by Topf on 5 November 1942. The general design corresponds to Polevoi’s description. The Auschwitz Central Construction Office [or *Zentralbauleitung*] possessed a copy of the patent application, which was found by the Russians when they liberated the camp. It is possible that Polevoi had been shown this document and that he had drawn his conclusions from it” 143.

In reality, no patent application (*Patentanmeldung*) for a *kontinuierlich arbeitender Leichen-Verbrennungsofen für Massenbetrieb* was ever found in the archives of the *Zentralbauleitung*, therefore it could not have been shown to Poljevoi at all; the copy of the document in the possession of the Auschwitz Museum originates in fact from the *Deutsches Patentamt* (German Patent Office) at Berlin and reached the Museum very late. As noted in a “Service Note” (*Notatka subowa*) dated 17 January 1985, the document, archived on that same date by Franciszek Piper, had been transmitted “to the Director [of the Auschwitz Museum] K. Smole by Harold Kirschner, Ministerial Director at the Ministry of Justice of Bonn on 9 July 1984” 144.

Still more incredible is van Pelt’s attempt to justify Ada Bimko’s lies. Van Pelt claims, in fact, that the witness had seen “the conductor of the ventilation system installed near the ceiling of the gas chamber” 145: but no alleged gas chamber in the Birkenau crematoria possessed a disaeration (*Entlüftung*) or aeration (*Belüftung*) installation consisting of visible metallic piping. He adds that Ada Bimko’s SS guide “incorrectly identified the cylinders containing the ventilators as gas cylinders” 146, but the “cylinders [*that is, the metallic housings*] containing the ventilators”, as van Pelt well knows, were located in the attics of crematoria II and III, not in the alleged gas chambers, therefore, the SS guide and false witness could never have seen them 147.

This is van Pelt covers up Ada Bimko lies with more lies!

But the worst thing is that the methodology of these historians is intended solely to invert the terms of the problem, to transform lies into truth: instead of reality projecting a “propagandistic

142 Idem, pp. 159-161.

143 Idem, p. 161.

144 APMO, D-Z/ Bau, BW 30/44, p. 14.

145 Idem, p. 234.

146 Idem.

147 I have discussed van Pelt’s “explanation” in greater depth in the study *Olo-Dilettanti in Web*. Effepi Edizioni, Genoa, 2005.

shadow”, rather, it was propaganda projecting a “shadow” of imaginary reality. There were never any “reflections of the truth” to start with, just propaganda, literally worked up into the current “historical” version of events with the passing of the years.

The only “reflections” of the truth” were the real elements of life in the camp, from which, with insolent propagandistic impostures, Resistance members interned Auschwitz fabricated the fairy tale of the mass

exterminations in gas chambers.

8) The decline of the propaganda lie: revisionist criticism

The imitative portrait of Auschwitz created by Soviet propaganda has now been irreversibly obscured by historical revisionism.

My own contribution to all this has covered all the fundamental aspects of Holocaust historiography on Auschwitz.

As is well known, according to the current official historical “truth”, the alleged mass extermination at Auschwitz was carried out by means of a successive and consistent development of events starting with the first gassing in the basement of *Block 11* of Auschwitz in September 1941, which permitted the murderers to experiment, and then adopt, the murder weapon: Zykon B. The homicidal gassings were then committed in the crematoria, of the *Stammlager*, i.e., Auschwitz main camp, and later transferred to the so-called *Bunkers* at Birkenau.

Finally, the crematoria at Birkenau entered into operation as extermination installations starting in March 1943.

I wrote a specific study of each of these alleged phases, briefly summarising my conclusions at each stage.

a) The first gassing 148.

The first homicidal gassing at Auschwitz, according to Danuta Czec’s official reconstruction, is based exclusively on the contradictory declarations of self-proclaimed eyewitnesses, and is disproved by the documents; it is therefore entirely without historical foundation.

Her work was drawn up in October 1941 by one of the black propaganda centers of the Auschwitz underground Resistance movement, based on the initial idea of experimentation on human beings using an unnamed war gas in an unidentified *Bunker* or “concrete shelter” at Auschwitz. Only later, inspired by the disinfestations with Zyklon B which intensified with the expansion of the camp, did the propagandists introduce Zyklon B into their stories, locating the first homicidal gassing in the basement of *Block 11*. The normal transport of the bodies of registered inmates within the camp, from the mortuary room of *Block 28* to the crematorium offered new material, further enriching the narrative.

In 1946, Judge Jahn Sehn, in view of the need to provide a pseudo-historical underpinning based on the tales of eyewitnesses for the purpose of creating fictitious but legally actionable “fact”, they invented the initial nucleus of the tale, which included the canonical literary elements of the number of victims and the various phases of the gassing, but without the dates.

In 1959, Danuta Czech, by means of a manipulation of the more impudent and outrageous sources, summarized and expanded Jan Sehn’s account, deriving a purely fictitious “convergence of evidence” from a congeries of contradictory testimonies, and correlating it with equally fictitious dates: thus did the first gassing become “history”.

148 *Auschwitz: la prima gasazione*. Edizioni di Ar, Padua, 1992. Revised and expanded American edition: *Auschwitz: The First Gassing. Rumor and Reality*. Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago, 2005.

b) Crematorium I 149

The alleged gassings in the crematorium I of Auschwitz are without foundation in historical reality. This

historiographical fairy story was based exclusively upon eyewitness testimonies, which were both sparse and reciprocally contradictory. The more detailed accounts, which are therefore easier to check, are obviously and demonstrably false. The “reconstructions” of historians are purely conjectural and fictitious, without any documentary basis. An examination of the archives of the Auschwitz *Neubauleitung* (later *Bauleitung* and finally *Zentralbauleitung*) outlines the history of the draft designs of crematory ventilation plans drawn up by the Topf company and establishes, with sufficient clarity, the manner in which the provisional installations which were finally installed were actually realized and how they really worked. Drawings and prototypes were executed in the context of the need to equip an ordinary mortuary chamber, but without gas chamber, so far – a hypothesis not supported by the slightest documentary evidence.

Finally, my study of the alleged Zyklon B introduction apertures pierced in the roof of the mortuary room by the Poles after the war shows that they necessarily presuppose the architectonic structure of the time, rather than the original structure of the crematorium in 1942, and could not, therefore, bear any relationship to the presumed original apertures, of which no material or documentary trace remains.

The alleged use of the mortuary room of crematorium I at Auschwitz as a gas chamber is therefore without historical basis: it is not history, but historical propaganda, tirelessly rehashed over the course of decades.

c) The Bunkers at Birkenau 150.

The story of the gassings in the so-called *Bunkers* at Birkenau is entirely without the slightest documentary foundation. These alleged installations do not appear in the documentation of the *Zentralbauleitung*, particularly, the documents which should be there if they really existed, do not exist, namely, the blueprints and cost estimates of Auschwitz camp and the construction reports of the Auschwitz and Birkenau camps, which are almost complete for 1942. A diagram of the installations at Birkenau show, by contrast, that the two houses rebaptized “gassing Bunkers” by Soviet and Polish propaganda, were never mentioned by the *Zentralbauleitung* – they had no identification numbers, no *Bauwerk* numbers, or designation – they were not therefore transformed into anything at all, and no homicidal gassings were committed there.

Black propaganda on the *Bunkers* was disseminated by Auschwitz Resistance groups from 1942 onwards, based on the designations (*Degasungskammer*) [“degassing chamber”] and *Begasungskammer* [“fumigation chamber”] in relation with the *Aufnahmehgebäude* [“reception building”] in the description of the BW 5a and 5b disinfection installations, as explained above. The existence of these installations represents a necessary, but not sufficient, condition, however, for the birth of the propaganda legend.

But the triggering incident catalyzing the imagination of the propagandists was still missing: the mass graves and the burning of bodies in the open. The burning of the bodies exhumed from the mass graves 151, which occurred daily for months, struck the imaginations of Auschwitz inmates. This was this “eternal fire” 152 which inspired the propagandists: if thousands of bodies were being burned outside the camp, this proves there was a mass extermination; and if there was a mass extermination,

149 *Auschwitz: Crematorium I and the Alleged Homicidal Gassing*. Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago, 2005.

150 *The Bunkers of Auschwitz. Black propaganda versus History*. Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago, 2005.

151 The bodies of registered inmates having died of disease and exhaustion in 1942, which the small crematorium at Auschwitz was unable to cremate, were buried in mass graves and later exhumed and burnt in the open to eliminate the risk of polluting the ground waters at Birkenau.

152 This phrase was used by the propagandists to refer, first, to the “cremation ditches” and later to the crematoria themselves.

of BW 5a and 5b.

This was the origin of the propaganda story of the *Bunkers* at Birkenau.

A more in-depth – or less superficial – study of these three aspects of the presumed policy of an extermination of the Jews at Auschwitz consisted of 33 pages written on the subject by Franciszk Piper 153; the three above-mentioned studies by myself cover approximately 600 pages; the present simple comparison shows the inconsistency and ineptitude of the official historiography.

d) The crematoria at Birkenau 154.

The documents of the *Zentralbauleitung* not only do not corroborate the propaganda theme of the homicidal gassings in the crematoria, but actually disprove it, directly and indirectly.

Above all, the documentation on the use of the mortuary chambers of the Birkenau crematoria shows that, as early as March 1943, they had never been used, nor could they be used, as “undressing rooms” and “gas chambers” in the context of a mass extermination by gassing, and the whole theory that they were, is historically unfounded.

In the second place, the blueprint of the camp hospital in *Bauabschitt III* (construction sector III) of Birkenau camp, with its 114 barracks for sick inmates (*Krankenbaracken*) and 12 barracks for the seriously ill (*Baracken für Schwerkranke*), as correctly noted by Pressac, is incompatible with the theory of mass extermination. The blueprint was drawn up at the beginning of June 1943, in the context of “special measures for the improvement of hygienic installations” (*Sondermassnahmen für die Verbesserung der hygienischen Einrichtungen*) in Birkenau camp, ordered by *SS-Brigadeführer* Kammler at the beginning of May 1943.

The camp hospital, however, did not remain in the fanciful design stage, as believed by Pressac. The SS began work at the end of the month of July and continued until 23 September 1944. Only the change in the military situation impeded full realization.

The alleged “criminal traces” listed by Pressac, beginning with the “undressing room” (*Auskleideraum*) and the “fumigation basement” (*Vergasungskeller*) – all have entirely innocuous explanations; other, such as the fake shower heads, fell in the category of the “special measures” mentioned above, aiming at the installation of a real shower bath (*Brauseanlage*) for camp inmates in crematoria II and III. As for the presumed “definitive proof” of the *Gasprüfer* (gas testers), the alleged “cyanide gas testing paper”, this proves nothing, as it has no relation to the “gas chambers” 155.

Finally, the indispensable Zyklon B introduction apertures in the reinforced concrete roof of *Leichenkeller 1* (the alleged homicidal gas chamber) of crematorium II at Birkenau, never existed; the official historiography can only claim to have identified them through the use of openly fraudulent methodologies. Even the alleged metallic mesh Zyklon B introduction columns are simply a figment of the imagination, since there not the slightest trace of these devices remains in the register of the *WL-Schlosserei* (metal-working office), which lists all orders related to the crematoria from 28 October 1942 onwards 156.

153 F. Piper, *Die Vernichtungsmethoden*, in: *Auschwitz 1940-1945*, in: *Studien zur Geschichte des Konzentrations- und Vernichtungslagers Auschwitz*, op. cit., vol. III, pp. 137-169.

154 *The Morgues of the Crematoria at Birkenau in the Light of Documents*, in: *The Revisionist*, vol. 2, no. 3, August 2004, pp. 271-294.

155 *I Gasprüfer di Auschwitz*, in: *I Gasprüfer di Auschwitz. Analisi storico-tecnica di una "prova definitiva"*. Heft von Auschwitz, no. 2, March 2004, pp. 13-39. *Gasprüfer e prova del gas residuo*, idem, pp. 40-53.

156 “Keine Löcher, keine Gaskammer(n)”. *Historisch-technische Studie zur Frage der Zyklon B-Einwurflöcher in der Decke des Leichenkellers 1 im Krematorium II von Birkenau*, in: “*Vierteljahrshefte für freie Geschichtsforschung*” (VffG), year 6, no. 3, September 2002, pp. 284-304.

Die Einfüllöffnungen für Zyklon B - Teil 2: Die Decke des Leichenkellers von Krematorium II in Birkenau, in: VffG, year 8, no. 3, November 2004, pp. 275-290.

e) The crematory ovens

Sixty years after the end of the Second World War, the official historiography is still fumbling in the dark as to the crematory ovens at Auschwitz-Birkenau – structure, functioning, coke consumption, duration of the cremation process. Suffice it to say that the world-class “specialist” on Auschwitz for the moment, Robert Jan van Pelt, has imperturbably accepted Henryk Tauber’s thermo-technical absurdity as to the crematory capacity of the crematoria, adding, in turn, his own claim – which is no less absurd – that the cremation of a human body required only 3.5 kg of coke! **157**.

In my book, *I forni crematori di Auschwitz. Studio storico-tecnico con la collaborazione del dott. Ing. Franco Deana* [The Crematory Ovens of Auschwitz: Historical-Technical Study in Collaboration with Franco Deana, Certified Engineer], which should appear in 2005 as a worthy celebration of sixty years of Soviet propaganda, something now rendered impossible by unforeseen difficulties – all the problems related to cremation are dealt with and resolved scientifically. The work consists of two volumes. The first, consisting of text (approximately 500 pages), concerns itself, from an historical and technical viewpoint Section One of the first volume deals with modern cremation with particular reference to coke-fired gasogenous ovens, while Section Two deals with the ovens at Auschwitz-Birkenau and all the other ovens built by J.A. Topf & Söhne di Erfurt, as well as with the ovens built by their competitors, H. Kori, Didier-Werke and Ignis-Hüttenbau. The second volume contains 270 documents, many of them previously unpublished, and 360 photographs, most of them being my illustrations of the crematory ovens at Auschwitz (rebuilt by the Poles), Gusen, Dachau, Mauthausen, Buchenwald, Stutthof, Majdanek, Gross-Rosen, and Terezín.

This scientific study, the findings of which have already been briefly summarized by myself **158**, radically refutes all the thermo-technical fantasies of eyewitnesses and historians on the crematory ovens at Auschwitz, scientifically showing that only one body at a time could be cremated in one muffle at a time in an economically advantageous manner, in approximately one hour, with a coke consumption (in the event of continual cremation) ranging – based on the type of oven and the type of body – from a minimum of approximately 12 kg to a maximum of approximately 32 kg. The average coke consumption for a moderately emaciated body, for the crematoria at Birkenau, was approximately 17 kg of coke, almost five times the quantity supposed by van Pelt!

I also demonstrated that the testimonies of the “flaming chimneys” of Auschwitz-Birkenau are without foundation **159**; that the alleged “final proof” of the cremation capacity of the ovens at Birkenau (the letter from the *Zentralbauleitung* dated 28 June 1943) is without technical value and derives from a bureaucratic error **160**; that the presumed “final proof” **161** (K. Prüfer’s memorandum dated 8 September 1942), discovered by Pressac in 1995 but published in December 2004, is nonsensical (the document attributes the same cremation capacity to the 8-muffle oven as it does to the 5 three-muffle ovens!) in contradiction to the declarations of both witnesses and historians **162**.

Finally, the alleged cremation ditches at Birkenau, due to the high water table, could not have been over a meter deep (which is in contradiction to all the

157 R.J. van Pelt, *The Case for Auschwitz. Evidence from the Irving Trial*, op. cit., p. 462.

158 *The Crematoria Ovens of Auschwitz and Birkenau*, in: G. Rudolf (Ed.), *Dissecting the Holocaust. The Growing Critique of “Truth” and “Memory”*. Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago, 2003, pp. 373-412.

159 *Flammen und Rauch aus Krematoriumskaminen*, in: VffG, anno 7, no. 3 & 4, December 2003, pp. 386-391.

160 “*Schlüsseldokument*” – eine alternative Interpretation. Zum *Fälschungsverdacht des Briefes der Zentralbauleitung Auschwitz vom 28.6.1943 betreffs der Kapazität der Krematorien*, in: VffG, anno 4, no. 1, June 2000, pp. 50-56.

161 Since 1989, Holocaust historiography has solemnly and repeatedly proclaimed to have found the “definitive refutation” of the claims of revisionists and the “definitive proof” of the reality of the gas chambers, all of it vanishing almost instantly, one after another, like soap bubbles .

testimonies) 163, while the alleged recovery of human fat, under the conditions described by the witnesses, is a risible fantasy 164.

f) Various problems with the camp history

Official historiography on the subject was fumbling in the dark until 1998, even with regards to the *Zentralbauleitung* of Auschwitz, an extremely important office, both because it was responsible for the construction and expansion of the camp, and because, as already stated, its archives were left practically intact.

The first book on the subject was written by myself 165.

The theory of "code language" (*Sonderbehandlung*, *Sonderaktion*, etc.) in the documents, as regards Auschwitz, has no basis in fact and is disproven by the documents themselves, as I demonstrated in a 188-page book 166 to which the official historiography can only offer Robert Jan van Pelt's devastating refutation in rebuttal: half a line, in which, after mentioning the *Spezialeinrichtungen* (special installations) and *Sonderbehandlung*, our world-class "expert" pontificates: "The last term refers to the killing"! 167.

The real number of victims at Auschwitz is about 135,000; the total number of inmates admitted to the camp is at least 500,100. Approximately 401,500 were registered and approximately 98,600 were not registered 168.

Inmates not admitted to the camp were transferred East. Thus, to be precise, inmates who were able to work were allowed to break their journey at Auschwitz on their way East, and were assigned to work there during their stay, as explicitly confirmed by the Pohl report to Himmler dated 16 September 1942.

Danuta Czech, in the republication of her *Kalendarium* of Auschwitz 169, concealed at least 97,000 inmates who were transferred to other camps in 1944, thus creating fake "gassing victims" 170.

The most terrible alleged gassings – those of the Hungarian Jews 171, the Jews in the gypsy camp of Birkenau 172, the Jews from the ghetto at Lodz 173 and the Jews from the family camp of the ghetto at Theresienstadt 174, are without basis in historical fact.~

Finally, the crimes attributed to Dr. Mengele have no historico-documentary foundation and are easily disproven by the hundreds of twins who survived Auschwitz 175.

163 "Verbrennungsgruben" und Grundwasserstand in Birkenau , in: VffG, year 6, no. 4, December 2002, pp. 421-424.

164 Verbrennungsexperimente mit Tierfleisch und Tierfett. Zur Frage der Grubenverbrennungen in den angeblichen Vernichtungslagern des 3. Reiches, in: VffG, year 7, no. 2, July 2003, pp. 185-194.

165La "Zentralbauleitung der Waffen-SS und Polizei Auschwitz", Edizioni di Ar, Padua,1998.

166 "Sonderbehandlung" ad Auschwitz. *Genesi e significato*. Edizioni di Ar, 2000.

167 R.J. van Pelt, *The Case for Auschwitz. Evidence from the Irving Trial*, op. cit., p. 209.

168 Alle radici della propaganda sovietica. I 4 milioni di morti ad Auschwitz: genesi, revisioni e implicazioni, in: *Il numero dei morti di Auschwitz. Vecchie e nuove imposture*. Heft von Auschwitz, no. 1, March 2004, pp. 5-18; Franciszek Piper e "Die Zahl der Opfer von Auschwitz", idem, pp. 19-38. Auschwitz: le nuove revisioni di Fritjof Meyer, idem, pp. 39-59. Sulla controversia Piper-Meyer: *Propaganda sovietica contro pseudorevisionismo*, in: *Auschwitz: nuove controversie e nuove fantasie storiche*. Heft von Auschwitz, no. 4, September 2004, pp. 5-31.

169 D. Czech, *Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz-Birkenau 1939-1945*. Rowohlt Verlag, Reinbeck bei Hamburg, 1989.

170 I detenuti trasferiti da Auschwitz-Birkenau nel 1944-1945, in: *Auschwitz: trasferimenti e finte gasazioni*. Heft von Auschwitz, no. 3, September 2004, pp. 5-16.

171 *Die Deportation der ungarischer Juden von Mai bis Juli 1944. Eine provisorische Bilanz*, in: VffG, year 5, no. 4, December 2001, pp. 381-395.

172 *La "gasazione" degli zingari ad Auschwitz il 2 August 1944*, in: *Auschwitz: trasferimenti e finte gasazioni*. Heft von Auschwitz, no. 3, September 2004, September 2004, pp. 37-43

173 *L'evacuazione del ghetto di Lodz e le deportazioni ad Auschwitz (August 1944)*, in, *Auschwitz: trasferimenti e finte gasazioni*. Heft von Auschwitz, no. 3, September 2004, pp. 17-36.

174 *Contributo alla storia del Familienlager-Theresienstadt di Birkenau*, unpublished study, the publication of which is forthcoming.

175 *Dr. Mengele und die Zwillinge von Auschwitz*, in: VffG, year 9, no. 1, September 2005, pp. 51-68.

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31

In a book on the open-air cremations at Birkenau in 1944 176, I presented an accurate analysis of the air and ground photographs (including the recently discovered photograph dated 23 August 1944), refuting all the fairy tales, one by one, of the gigantic gassings and cremations of Hungarian Jews at Birkenau in 1944. In this study, in fact, I demonstrated that:

- the official historiography knows absolutely nothing about the cremation pits and is unable to indicate how many of them there were, nor their location, nor their dimensions, nor their capacity;
- the testimonies of the former inmates are radically contradictory as to both their number, location, dimensions or the capacity of the cremation ditches;
 - the testimonies of former inmates are radically disproven by the air photographs of Birkenau;
- the documents do show open air cremation activity during the summer of 1944, but on an extremely limited order of magnitude, absolutely incompatible with the immense sizes claimed by official historiography;
- the ground photographs show open air cremation activity in the north courtyard of crematorium V, but once again on an extremely limited order of magnitude which is absolutely incompatible with the immense sizes peddled by official historiography;
- if the stories of mass exterminations at Birkenau were true, the air photographs would show, among other things, cremation ditches with a total surface area of at least 5,900 square meters, both in the area of *Bunker 2* (from 1 to 4 ditches, according to the testimony), and in the area of crematorium V (from 2 to 5 ditches). But in reality, the air photographs show one single smoking surface area of approximately 50 square meters in the area of crematorium V (for a daily cremation capacity of about fifty bodies) and no trace of ditches and smoke in the area of *Bunker 2*.

So much for the 10,000 bodies per day cremated in the "cremation ditches" according to Roman Dawidowski's "expert report" and Holocaust historiography.

* * *

The draft law condemning "negationism" in Italy – or, more exactly, against myself personally -- introduced by Ministry of Justice Clemente Mastella, is, in my view, simply an honour paid to me personally, since it constitutes an explicit and irrefutable admission of the total capitulation of the official Holocaust historiography. Finally, it is an admission that my writings are historically irrefutable, and must, therefore, be prohibited, for this very reason.

If "historians" are content simply to "prove they're right" by having themselves declared correct in politically dominated courts of law, in the finest traditions of their Soviet propaganda masters, their "victory", in historical terms, will be both shameful and quite short-lived.

ABBREVIATIONS

AGK: Archiwum Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej (Archive of the Central Commission for the Investigation of the Crimes Against the Polish People – National Memorial), Warsaw

APMO: Archiwum Państwowego Muzeum w Oświęcimiu (Archive of the Auschwitz State Museum), Oświecim

FDRL: *Franklin Delano Roosevelt Library*, New York.

GARF: *Gosudarstvenni Archiv Rossiskoi Federatsii* (State Archive of the Russian Federation), Moscow

PRO: *Public Record Office*, Kew, Richmond, Surrey, Great Britain

RGVA: *Rossiiskii Gosudarstvenni Vojennii Archiv* (Russian State Military Archive), Moscow.

ROD: *Rijksinstituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie* (State Institute for War Documentation),
Amsterdam

Translated by C. Porter

